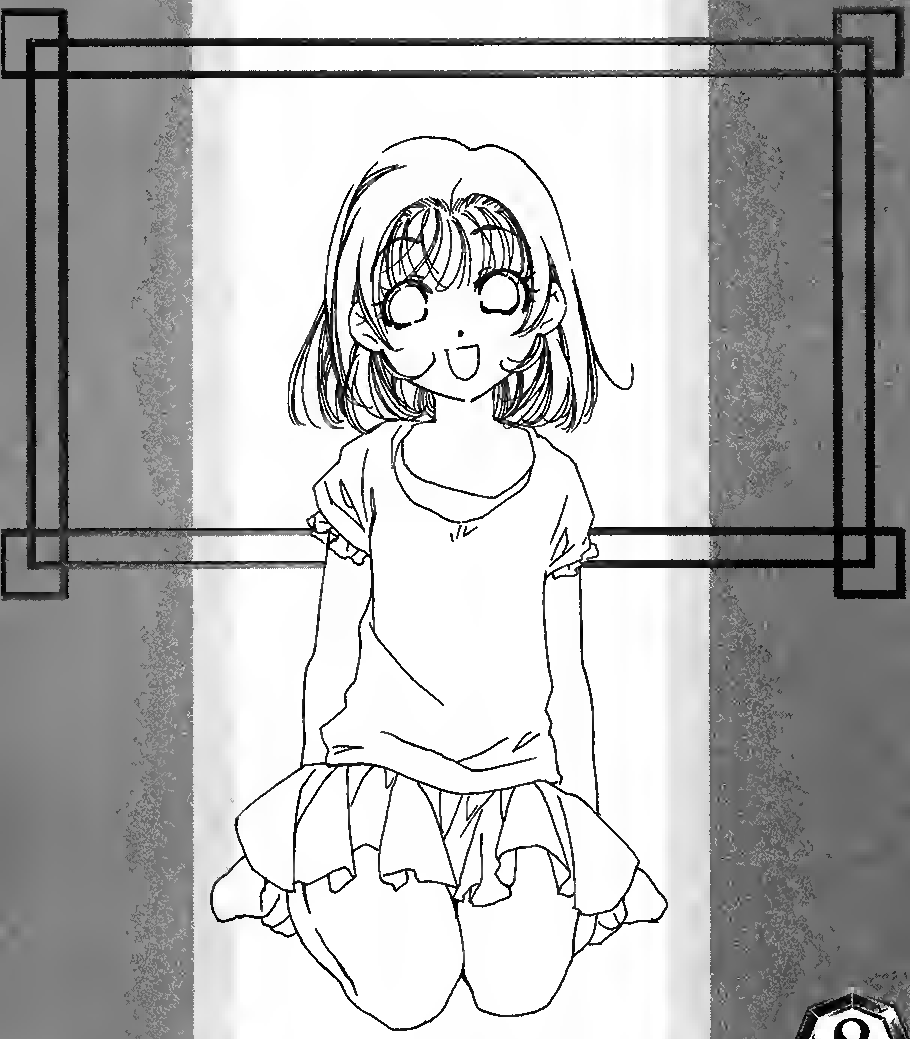
# mamotte shugogetten



Minene Sakurano

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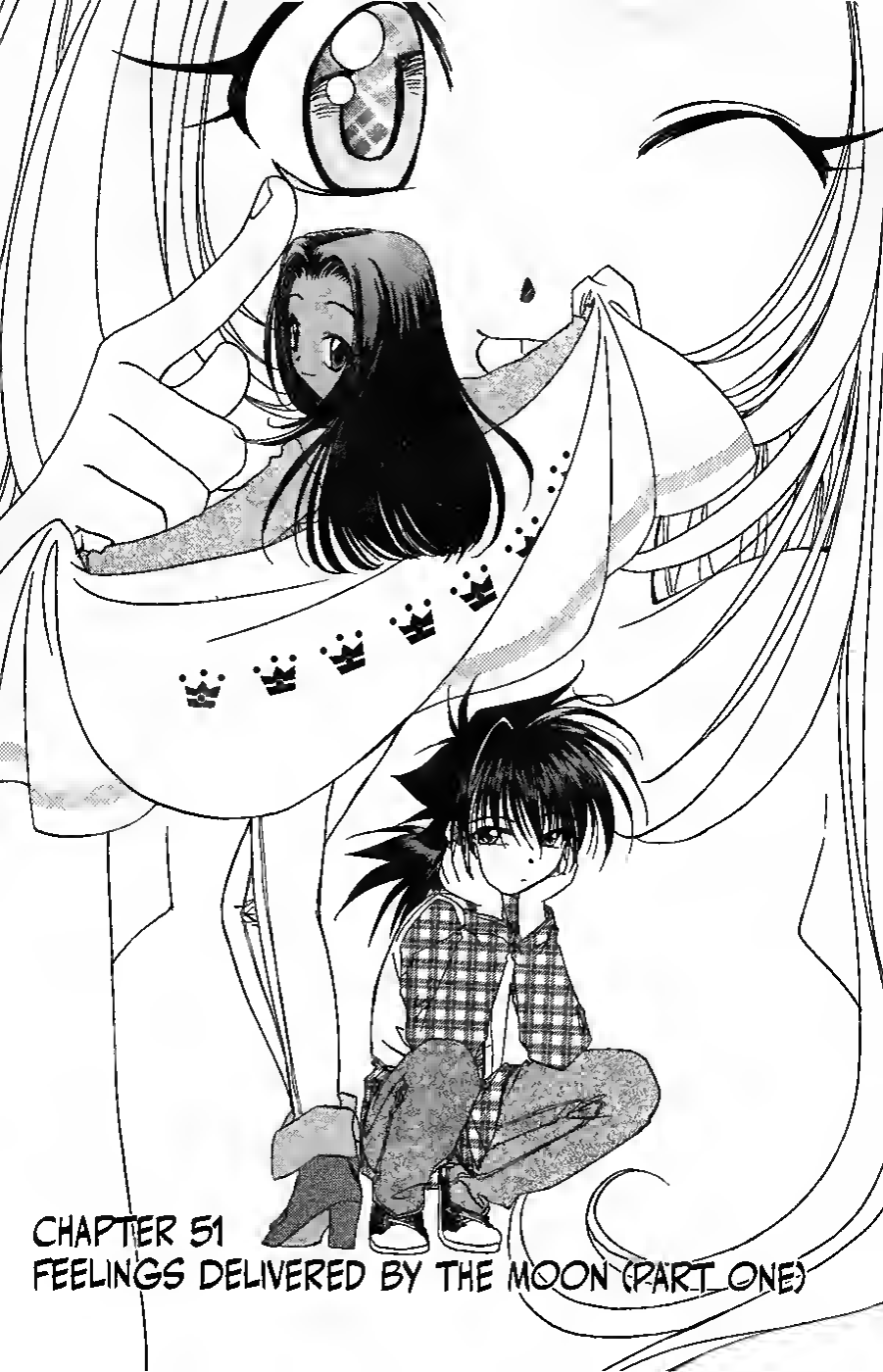
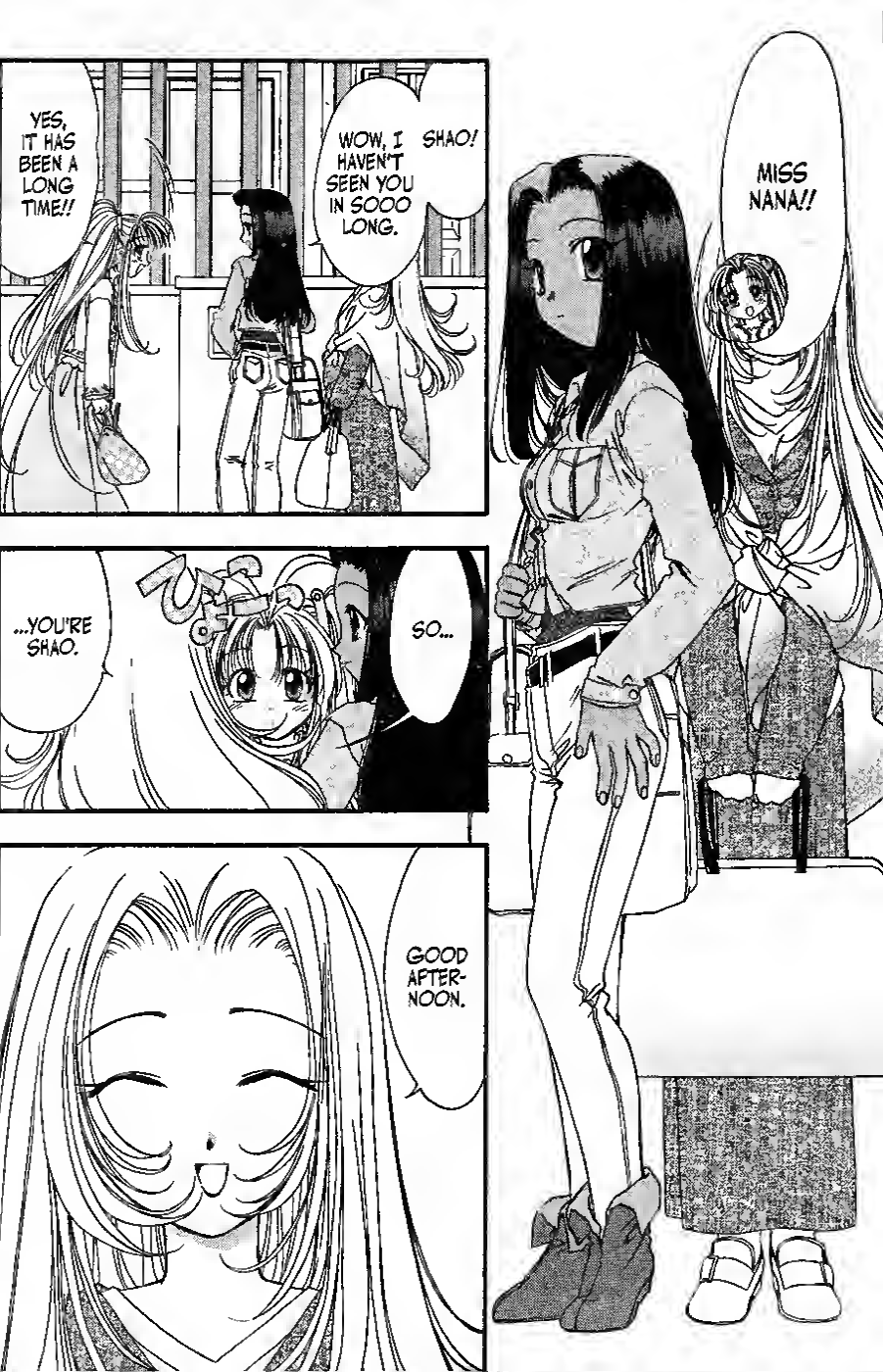
IT WAS 13 YEARS AGO...
...WHEN I TRUSTED THE MOON TO DELIVER MY LOVE TO YOU AND WATCH OVER YOU...
...EVEN THOUGH WE WERE FAR APART.
MY TASUKE...



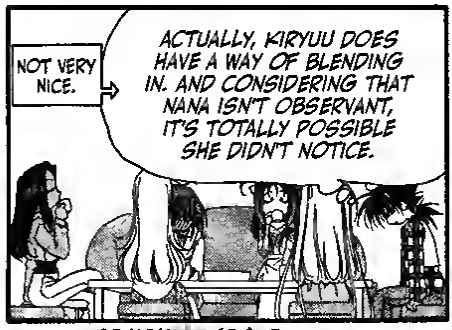
# CHAPTER 51
# FEELINGS DELIVERED BY THE MOON (PART ONE)

SIGH...
OH.
EITHER THE WORLD IS HUGE OR WE'RE REALLY SMALL.
IT TOOK SIX DAYS TO GET HERE.
THE WORLD ISN'T SO BIG.
AFTER ALL, IT IS...
...HELD TOGETHER WITH LOVE.

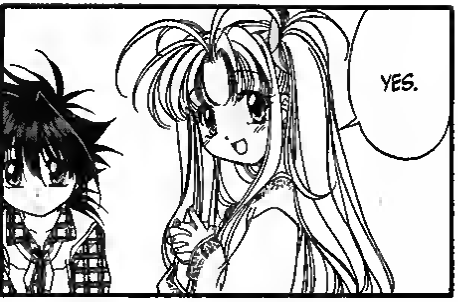

MISS NANA!!
SHAO!
WOW, I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN SOOO LONG.
YES, IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME!!
SO...
...YOU'RE SHAO.
GOOD AFTER-NOON.

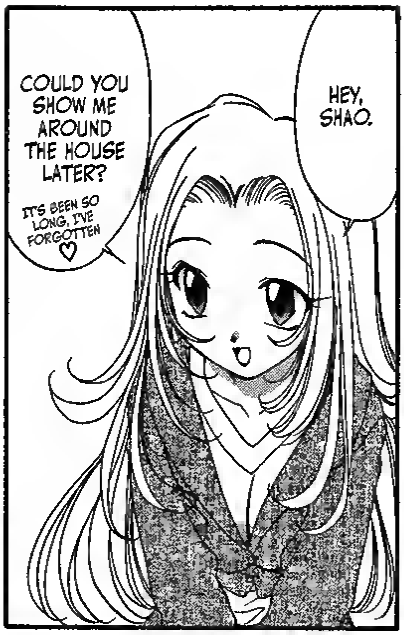
HOLD ON, KIRYUU.
WHO?
WHO'S THAT?
WHO IS SHE?
WHO KNOWS? WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?
CLICK
THAT'S AMAZING, SHAO. PUSH IT AGAIN!
YES!
TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY IS SO EXCITING
I'D NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE I CAME HERE EITHER.
IT'S LIKE MAGIC, ISN'T IT?
IS THE EASILY AMUSED CLUB HAVING FUN WITH THE TV?
THAT'S AMAZING!! OH WOW! IT'S AMAZING, ISN'T IT, SHAO?!

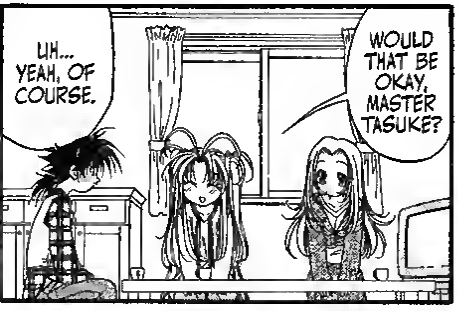
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT...
M-MIGG YUUAN.
...WHERE IS TASUKE? ISN'T HE HERE?
HE'S AT A MOVIE APPRECIATION MEETING AT HIS FRIEND'S HOUSE.
I THINK HE'LL BE HOME SOON.
THEY THINK THEY'RE SNEAKY
WELL, IF IT ISN'T MY BIG SIS...
...NANA!


NOT VERY NICE.
ACTUALLY, KIRYUU DOES HAVE A WAY OF BLENDING IN. AND CONSIDERING THAT NANA ISN'T OBSERVANT, IT'S TOTALLY POSSIBLE SHE DIDN'T NOTICE.

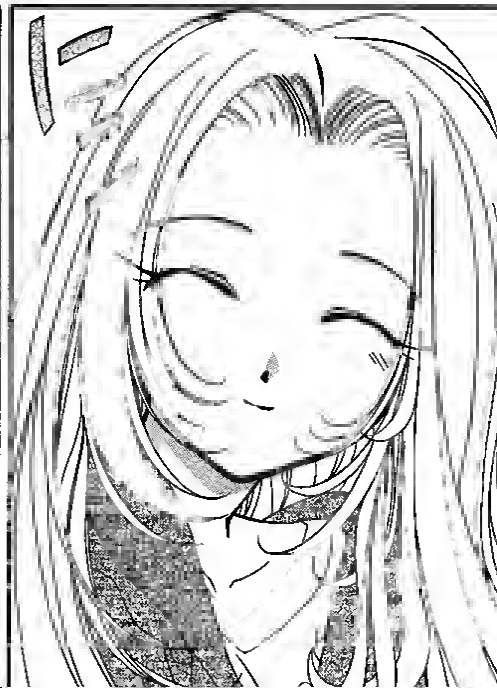
SO YOU DIDN'T NOTICE.


YES.

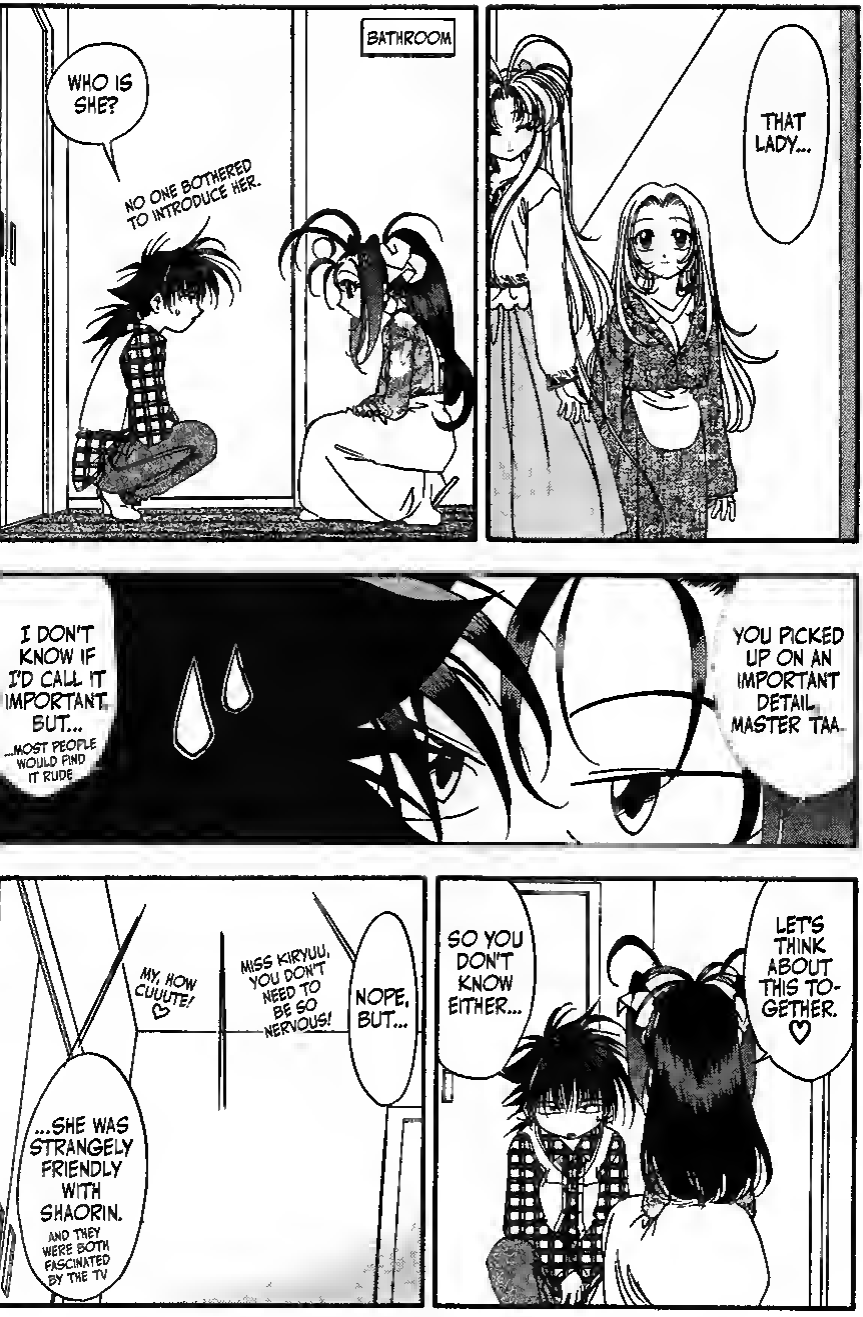

HEY, SHAO.
COULD YOU SHOW ME AROUND THE HOUSE LATER?
IT'S BEEN SO LONG, I'VE FORGOTTEN ♡


WOULD THAT BE OKAY, MASTER TASUKE?
UH... YEAH, OF COURSE.

.....

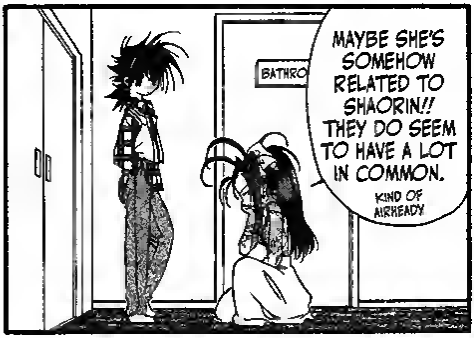


UMM, THIS IS...
...MY ROOM!
MY GOOD-NESS.
YOU KEEP IT SO CLEAN!
SHE IS A GIRL...
OH, IT'S NOTHING.
NEXT IS MISS KIRYUU'S ROOM. IT'S OKAY IF SHE LOOKS, MISS KIRYUU. DON'T BE SHY.
MY, HOW CUTE THIS LITTLE GIRL IS TOO!
OH.
HEY, RUUAN!!


BATHROOM
WHO IS SHE?
NO ONE BOTHERED TO INTRODUCE HER.
THAT LADY...
I DON'T KNOW IF I'D CALL IT IMPORTANT BUT...
...MOST PEOPLE WOULD FIND IT RUDE
YOU PICKED UP ON AN IMPORTANT DETAIL MASTER TAA-
...SHE WAS STRANGELY FRIENDLY WITH SHAORIN.
AND THEY WERE BOTH FASCINATED BY THE TV
MY, HOW CUULTE!♡
MISS KIRYUU, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SO NERVOUS!
NOPE, BUT...
SO YOU DON'T KNOW EITHER...
LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS TO-GETHER.♡

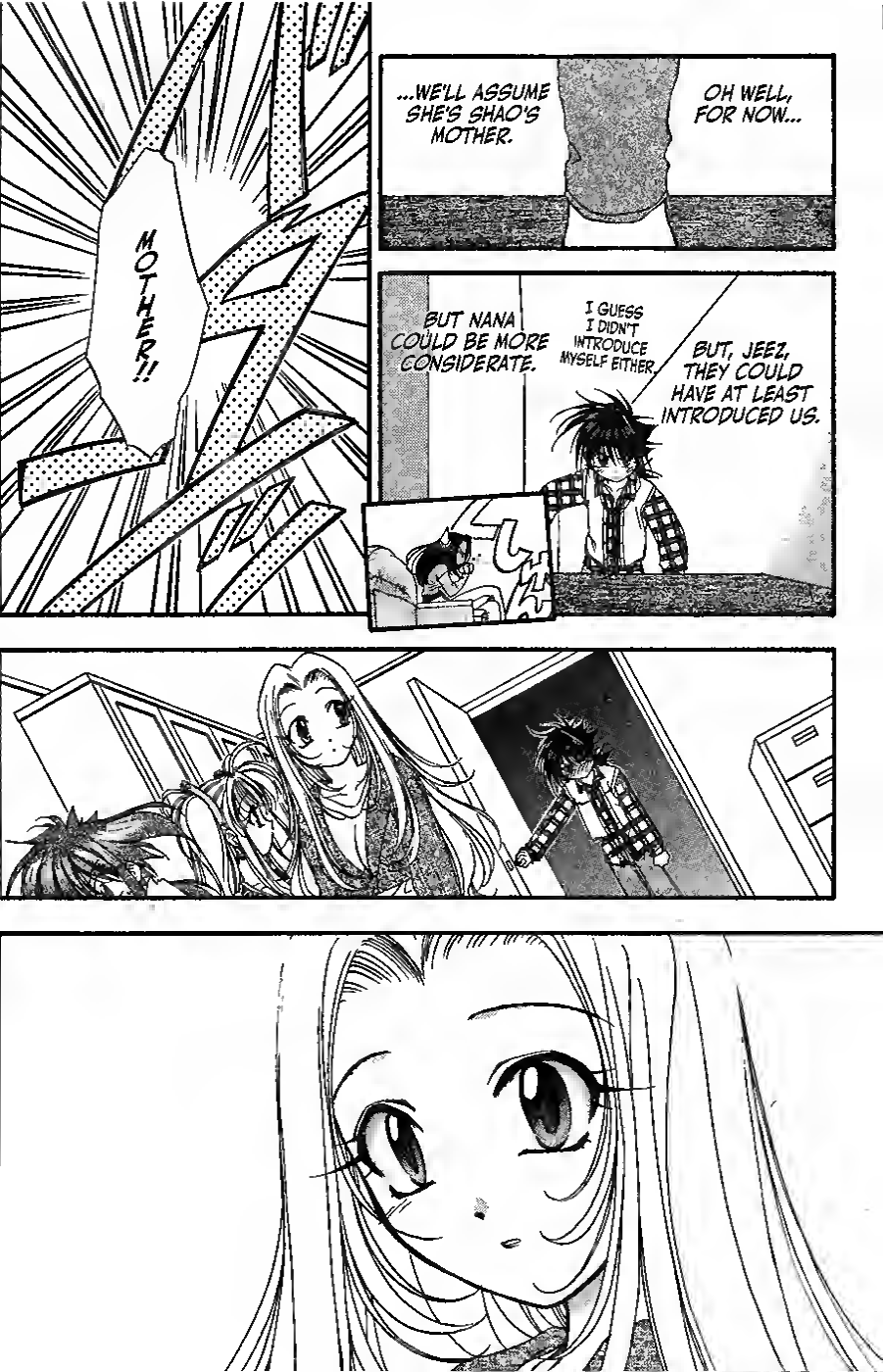
MAAAYBE...
...SHE'S HER MOTHER OR SOME-THING.

WITH SHAO?


BATHRO
MAYBE SHE'S SOMEHOW RELATED TO SHAORIN!! THEY DO SEEM TO HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.
KIND OF ALREADY

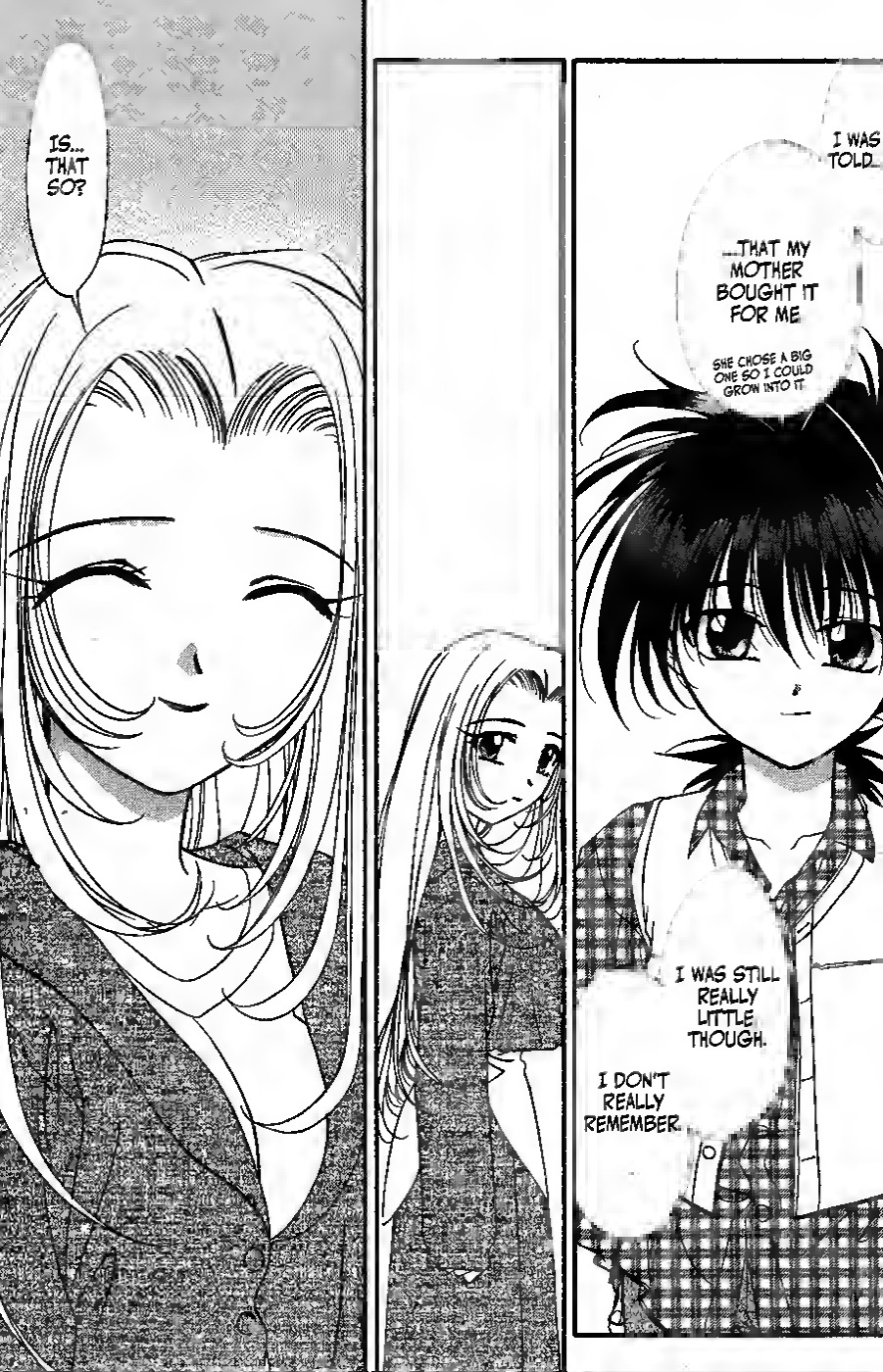
YOU SHOULD REMEMBER SOME-THING LIKE THAT...
IT'S POSSIBLE. I DON'T REMEMBER.
IT KIND OF SEEMS LIKE I HAD ONE, BUT IT KIND OF SEEMS LIKE I DIDN'T

WOW.
SPIRITS HAVE MOTHERS TOO?!!


MOTHER!!
...WE'LL ASSUME SHE'S SHAO'S MOTHER.
OH WELL, FOR NOW...
BUT NANA COULD BE MORE CONSIDERATE.
I GUESS I DIDN'T INTRODUCE MYSELF EITHER.
BUT, JEEZ, THEY COULD HAVE AT LEAST INTRODUCED US.

WELL, MOTHER.
RIGHT? HEH. UM...
ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU MY ROOM TOO.
...AS IF.
YES.
THANK YOU.
.....

じゃじゃーん
WELCOME, MOTHER.
THIS IS MY ROOM.
THIS BED LOOKS VERY OLD.
HAVE YOU BEEN USING IT SINCE YOU WERE YOUNG?
UH...
YES.

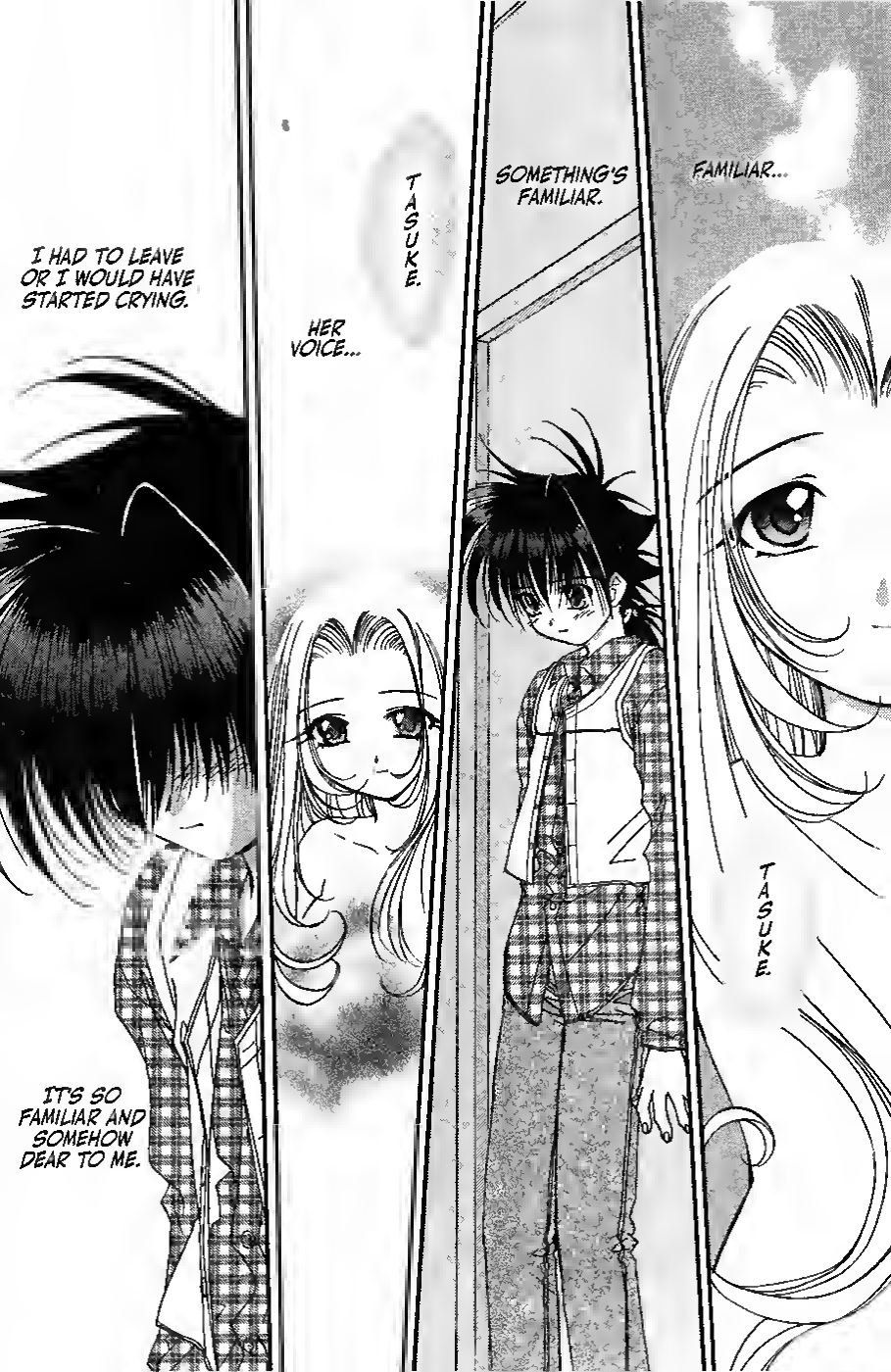

I WAS TOLD...
...THAT MY MOTHER BOUGHT IT FOR ME
SHE CHOSE A BIG ONE SO I COULD GROW INTO IT
I WAS STILL REALLY LITTLE THOUGH.
I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER
IS... THAT SO?

WHA--!!
YES, I'LL TAKE THAT!!
ARE YOU NUTS?! NO WAY!
HEY, GET GOING!!
I DIDN'T THINK SHAO KNEW HOW TO PLAY MAHJONG.
DID SHE PLAY WITH HER OTHER MASTERS?
RUUAN'S THE LOSER!! HER PUNISHMENT IS TO WALK AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD ON HER HANDS!
WOOOW
I
I'LL DO IT.
WH-WHAT?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE SHAO'S MOTHER.
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT CHINA.
OR THE GAMES THEY PLAY THERE.
OH, WONDERFUL. IT LOOKS LIKE A FUN GAME.

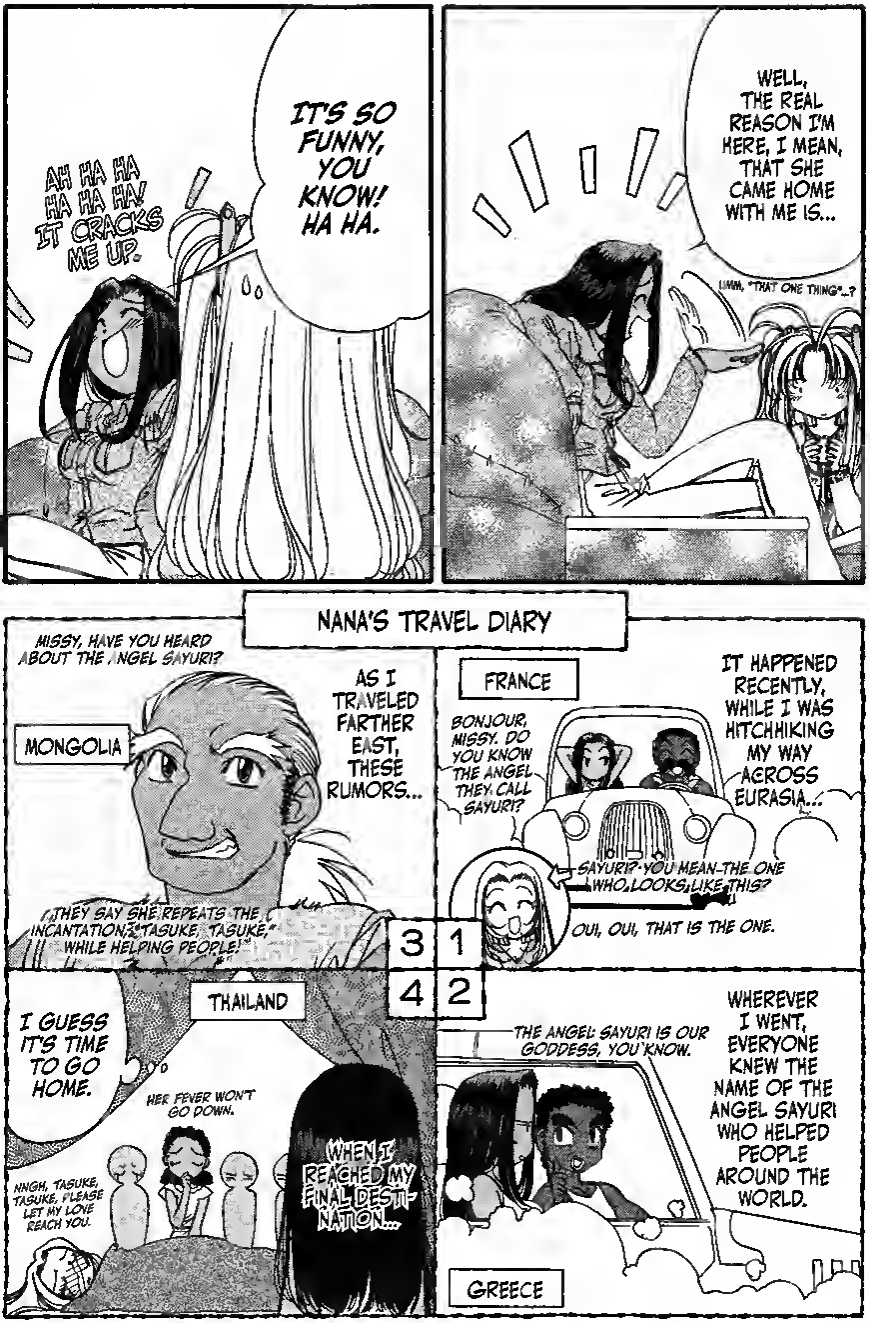
...TASUKE?
WHAT? SHE KNOWS MY NAME?
MAYBE THEY CAN TEACH ME HOW TO PLAY TOO!
WHAT?!
WHAT DO YOU SAY? WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN...
TASUKE...YOU KNOW...
...I PRAYED IT WOULD REACH YOU.
MY LOVE WOULD...
REACH YOU.
REACH YOU.

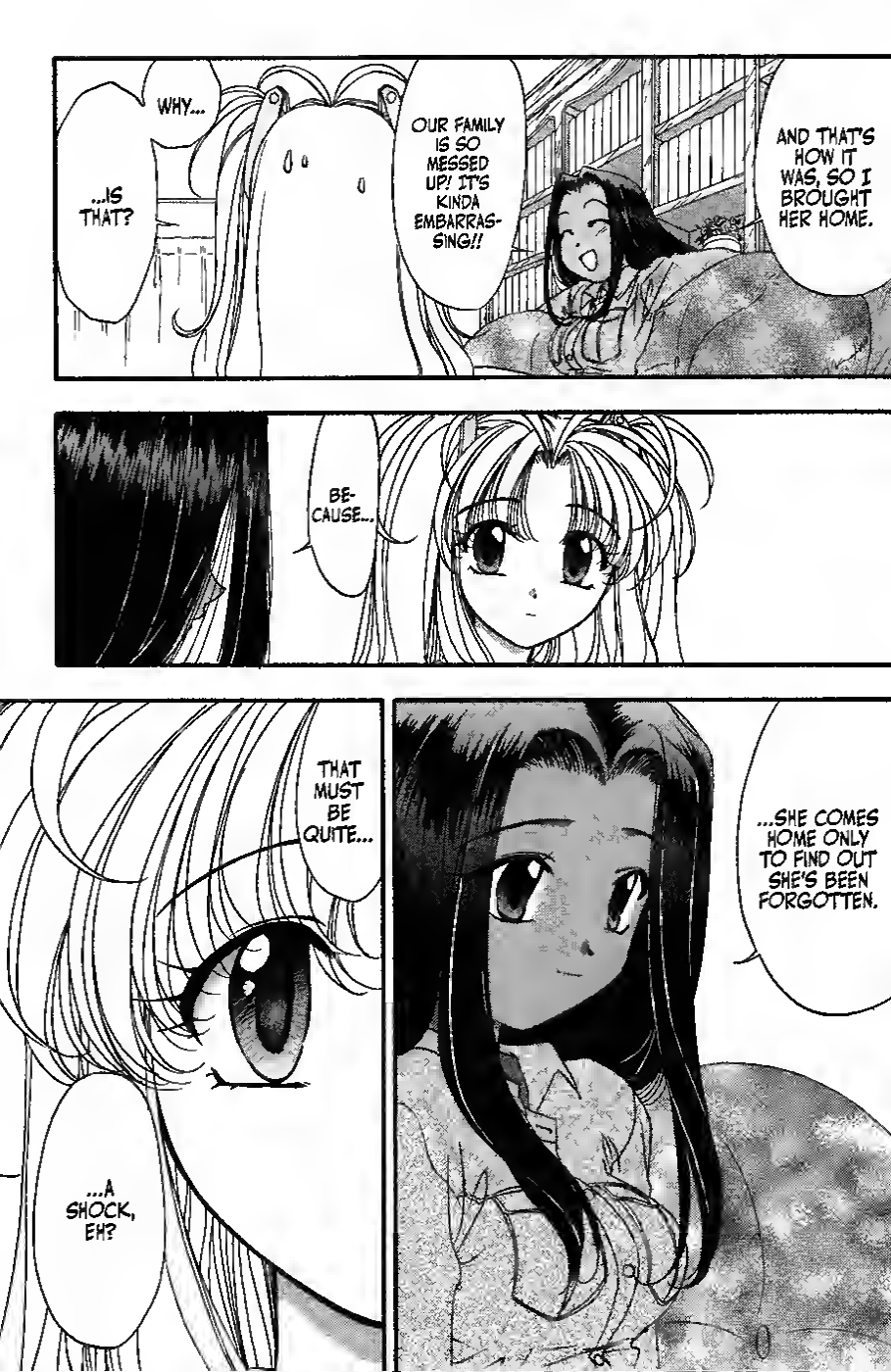
NO MATTER HOW FAR APART WE ARE...
...I KNOW THE MOON CONNECTS ME AND THIS CHILD.
I KNOW IT WILL CARRY MY FEELINGS TO HIM.
EVEN THOUGH HE IS FAR AWAY, HE WILL NOT FORGET ME.
UMM...
...I...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M GOING TO GO TO MY ROOM...
...AND READ A BOOK OR SOMETHING.

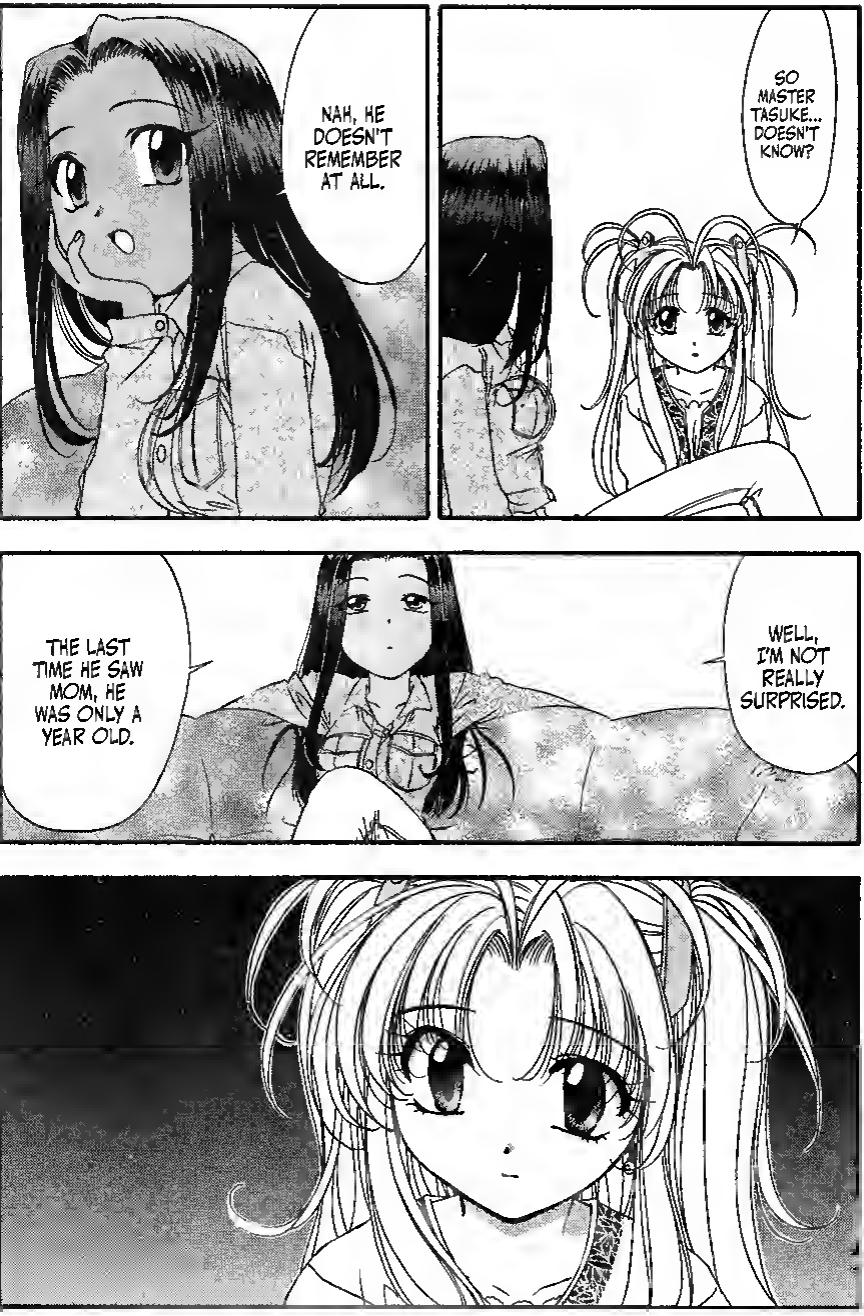
TASUKE.
TASUKE.
TASUKE.
TASUKE.
THAT'S NOT SHAO'S MOM.
I... KNOW HER.


FAMILIAR...
SOMETHING'S FAMILIAR.
TASUKE.
HER VOICE...
I HAD TO LEAVE OR I WOULD HAVE STARTED CRYING.
TASUKE.
IT'S SO FAMILIAR AND SOMEHOW DEAR TO ME.

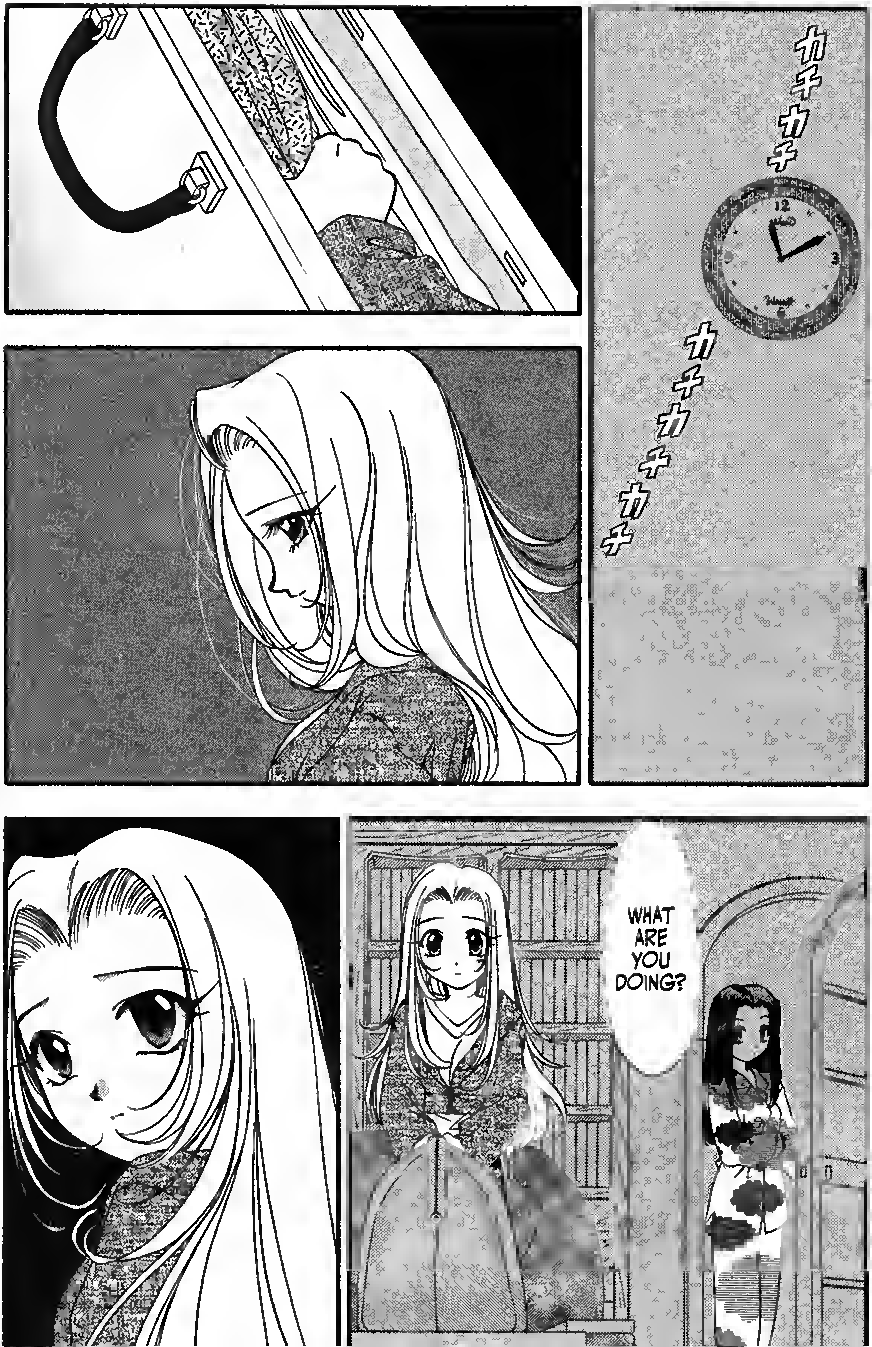
BUT HOW?
I CAN'T REMEMBER.
HMM...
I KNOW.
IF I HAD TO DESCRIBE HER IN ONE WORD, THEN I'D SAY SHE'S...
WEIRD.
SHE SEEMS LIKE A KIND AND NORMAL PERSON.
EH, SHE'S NORMAL IF YOU DON'T COUNT THAT ONE THING. AND THAT ONE THING IS REALLY... AMAZING...
?

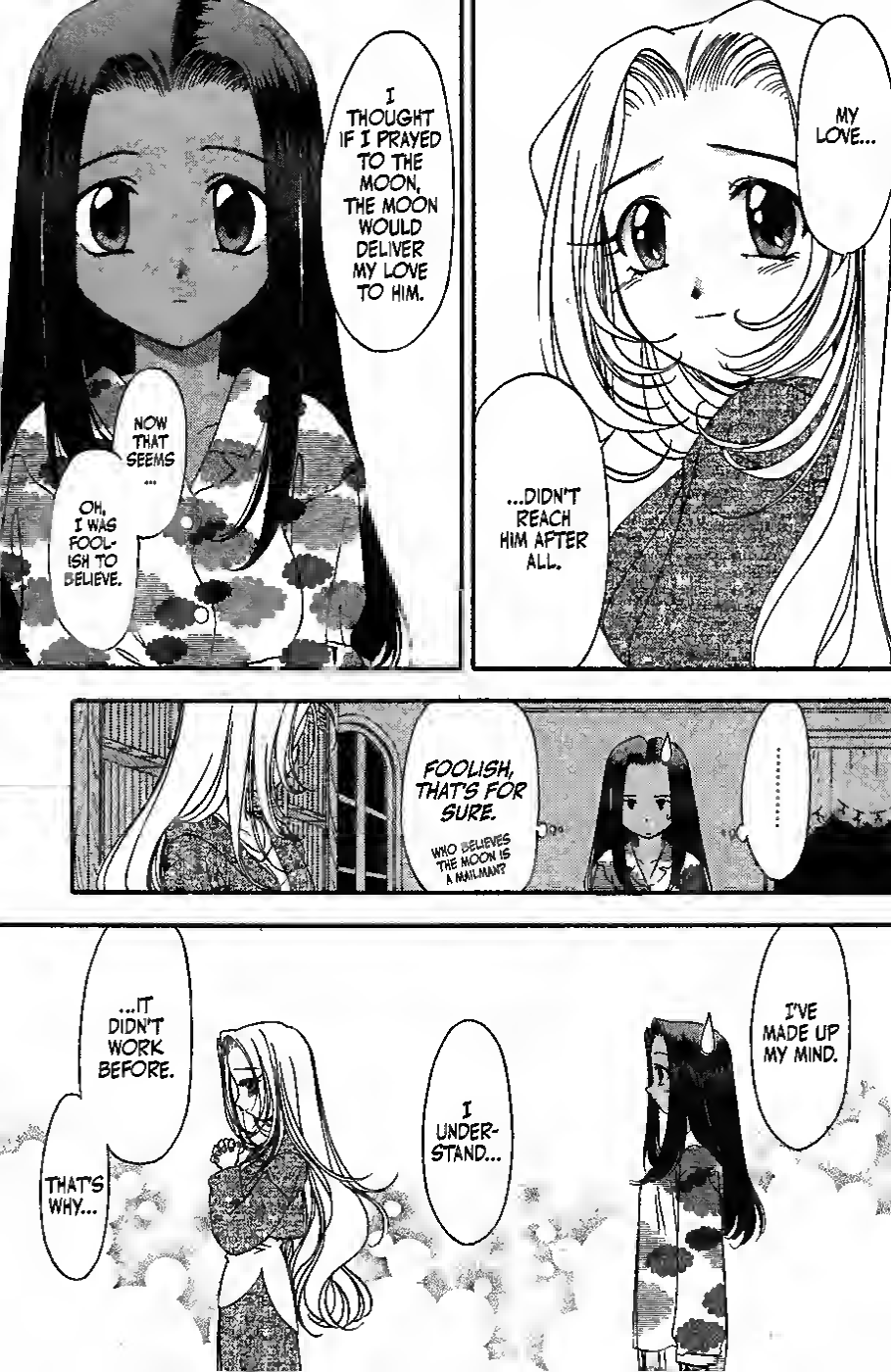

AH HA HA HA HA HA! IT CRACKS ME UP.
IT'S SO FUNNY, YOU KNOW! HA HA.
WELL, THE REAL REASON I'M HERE, I MEAN, THAT SHE CAME HOME WITH ME IS...
UMM, "THAT ONE THING"...?
NANA'S TRAVEL DIARY
MISSY, HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE ANGEL SAYURI?
AS I TRAVELED FARTHER EAST, THESE RUMORS...
MONGOLIA
"THEY SAY SHE REPEATS THE INCANTATION, "TASUKE, TASUKE," WHILE HELPING PEOPLE!
FRANCE
IT HAPPENED RECENTLY, WHILE I WAS HITCHHIKING MY WAY ACROSS EURASIA...
BONJOUR, MISSY. DO YOU KNOW THE ANGEL THEY CALL SAYURI?
SAYURI?-YOU MEAN-THE ONE WHO LOOKS LIKE THIS?
OUI, OUI, THAT IS THE ONE.
3
1
4
2
THAILAND
I GUESS IT'S TIME TO GO HOME.
HER FEVER WON'T GO DOWN.
NNGH, TASUKE, TASUKE, PLEASE LET MY LOVE REACH YOU.
WHEN I REACHED MY FINAL DESTINATION...
THE ANGEL SAYURI IS OUR GODDESS, YOU KNOW.
WHEREVER I WENT, EVERYONE KNEW THE NAME OF THE ANGEL SAYURI WHO HELPED PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD.
GREECE


WHY...
...IS THAT?
OUR FAMILY IS SO MESSED UP! IT'S KINDA EMBARRASSING!!
AND THAT'S HOW IT WAS, SO I BROUGHT HER HOME.
BE-CAUSE...
THAT MUST BE QUITE...
...A SHOCK, EH?
...SHE COMES HOME ONLY TO FIND OUT SHE'S BEEN FORGOTTEN.


NAH, HE DOESN'T REMEMBER AT ALL.
SO MASTER TASUKE... DOESN'T KNOW?
THE LAST TIME HE SAW MOM, HE WAS ONLY A YEAR OLD.
WELL, I'M NOT REALLY SURPRISED.

WELL...
I GUESS IT'S HER OWN FAULT...
EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE APART, SHE PROBABLY THOUGHT OF MASTER TASUKE ALL THE TIME.
A KIND MOTHER.
I WONDER...
...WHAT MASTER TASUKE THINKS OF HIS MOTHER.
COME TO THINK OF IT, I'VE NEVER HEARD...
...HIM TALK ABOUT HIS MOTHER.

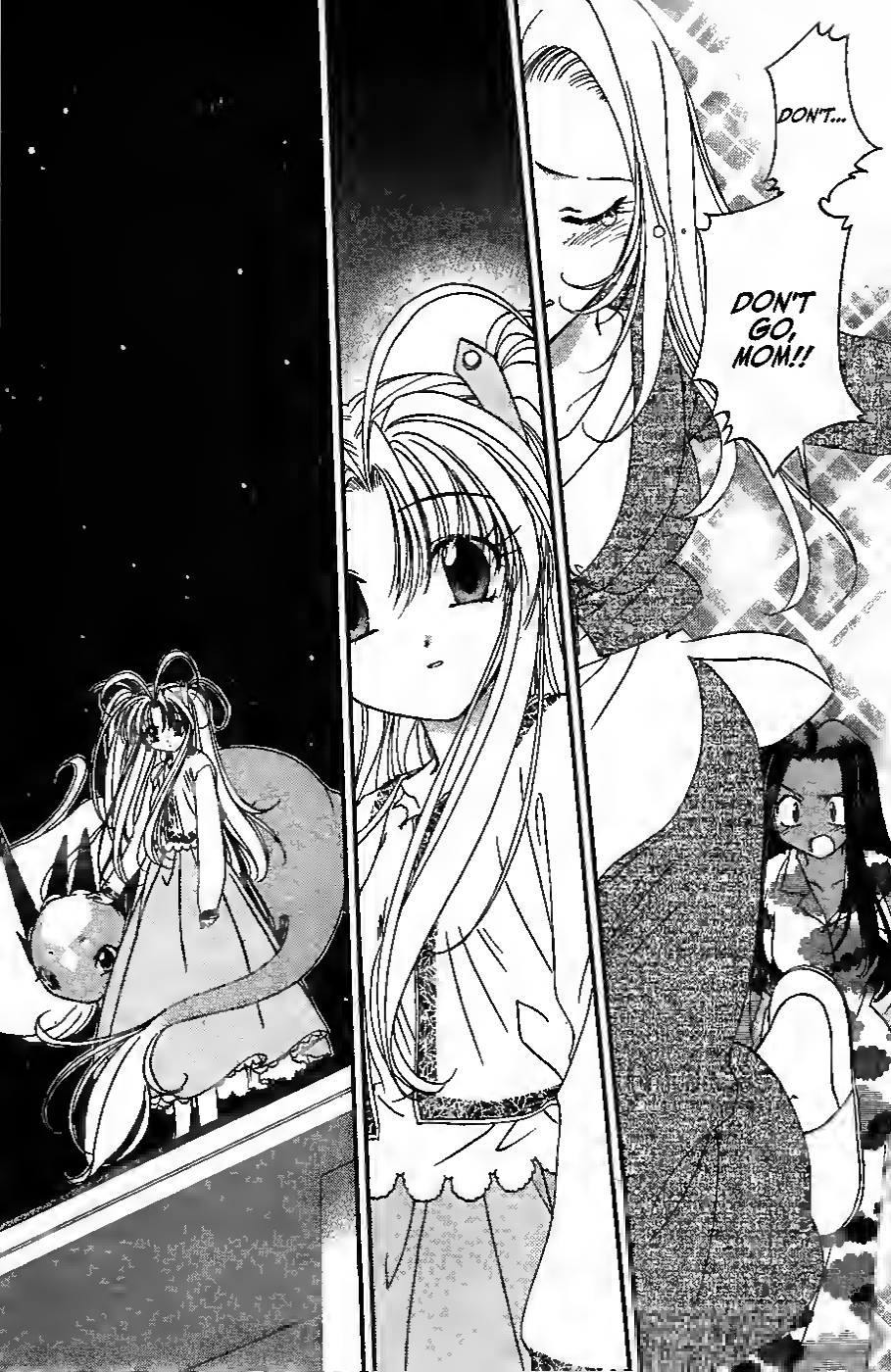

カチカチ
カチカチカチ
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

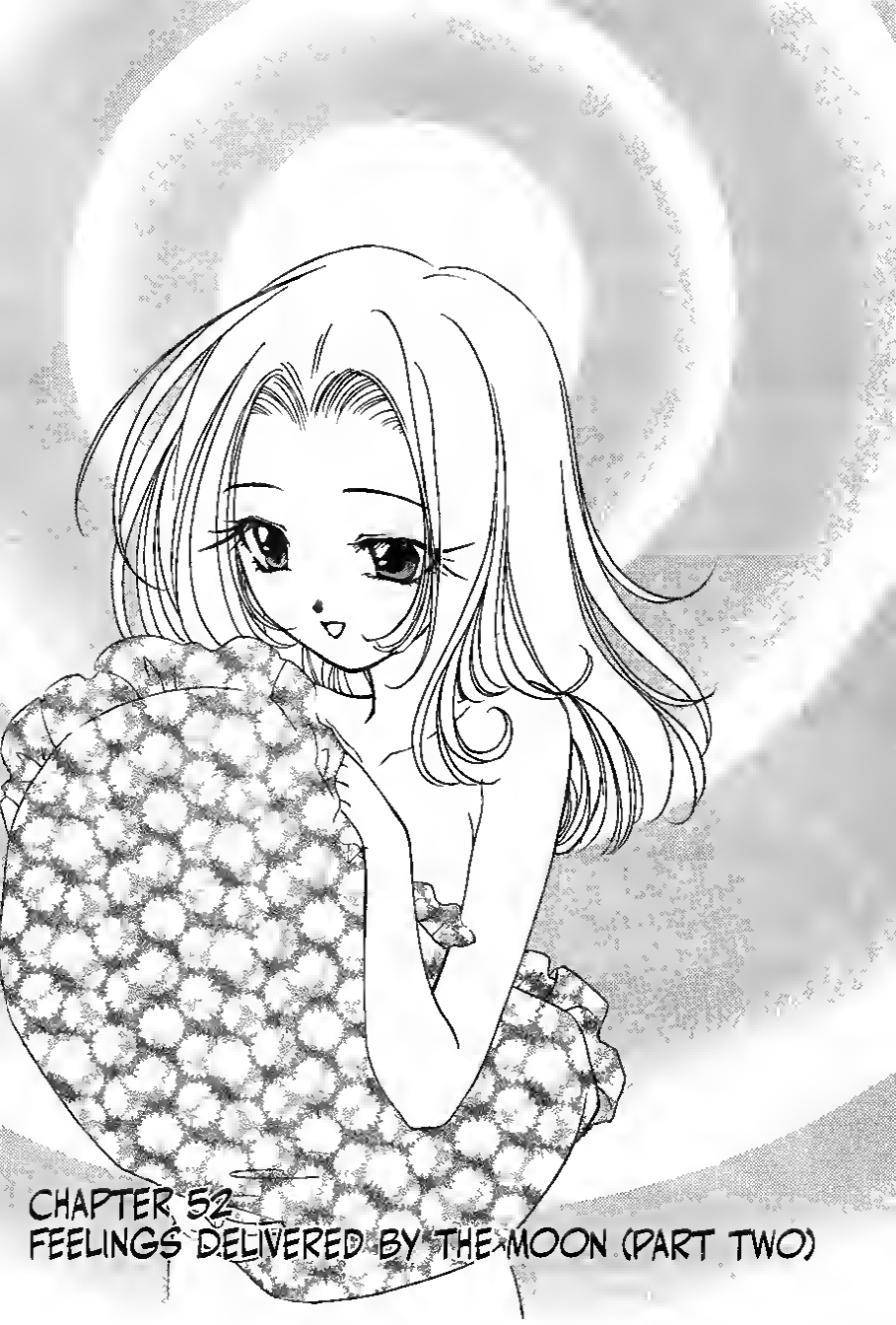

I THOUGHT IF I PRAYED TO THE MOON, THE MOON WOULD DELIVER MY LOVE TO HIM.
NOW THAT SEEMS ...
OH, I WAS FOOL-ISH TO BELIEVE.
MY LOVE...
...DIDN'T REACH HIM AFTER ALL.
FOOLISH, THAT'S FOR SURE.
WHO BELIEVES THE MOON IS A MAILMAN?
.....
...IT DIDN'T WORK BEFORE.
THAT'S WHY...
I UNDER-STAND...
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

...FROM NOW ON I WON'T PRAY TO THE MOON...
I WILL PRAY DIRECTLY TOWARDS JAPAN!!
.....
...WAIT!

BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER.
THERE'S NO MEMORY OF HER, BUT...
I KNOW HER.
I DEFINITELY KNOW HER.
I GET THE FEELING SHE'S SOMEONE I SHOULDN'T FORGET.
...MAYBE...

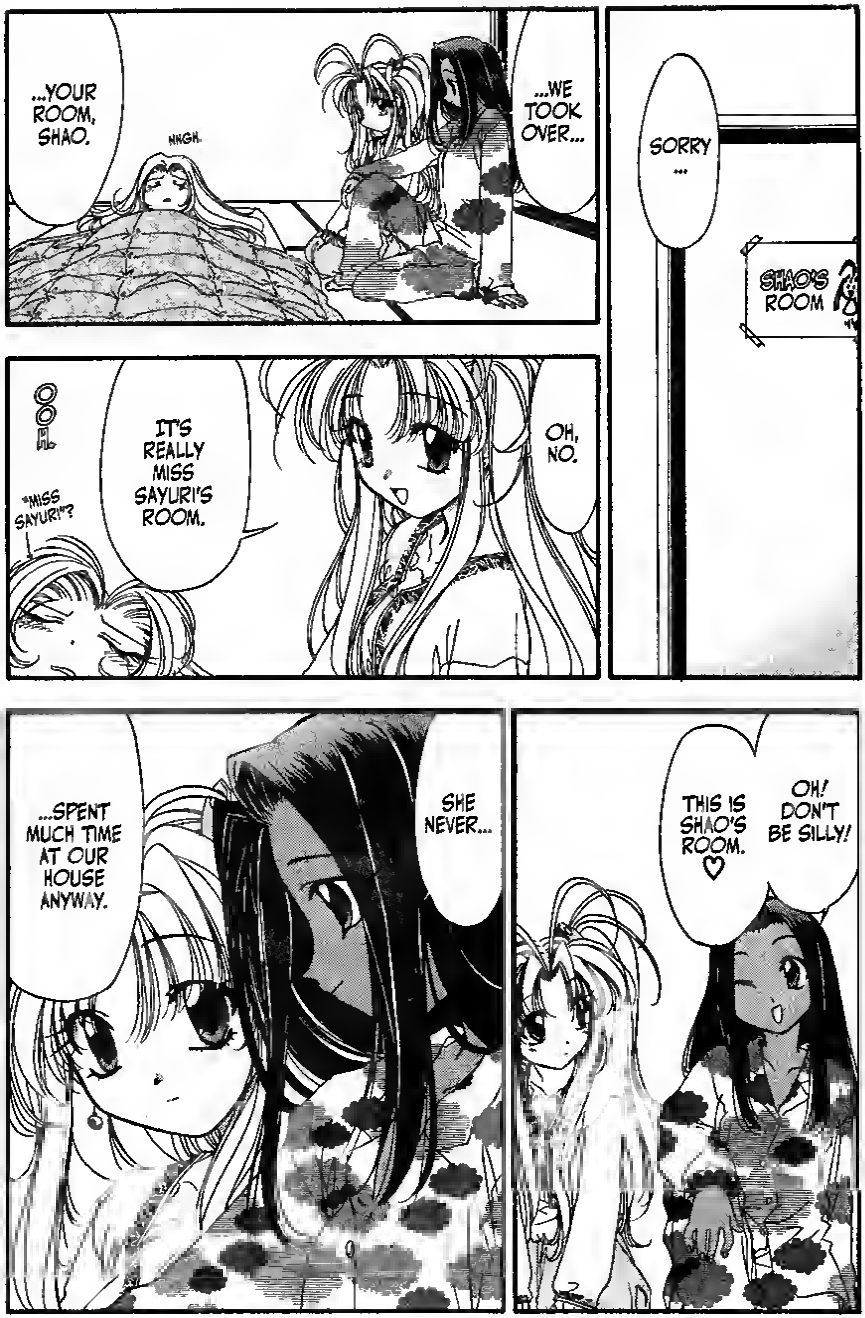
WAIT A MINUTE!!
I WON'T SAY GOODBYE. IT'LL MAKE LEAVING TOO DIFFICULT.
PLEASE GIVE MY BEST TO SHAO

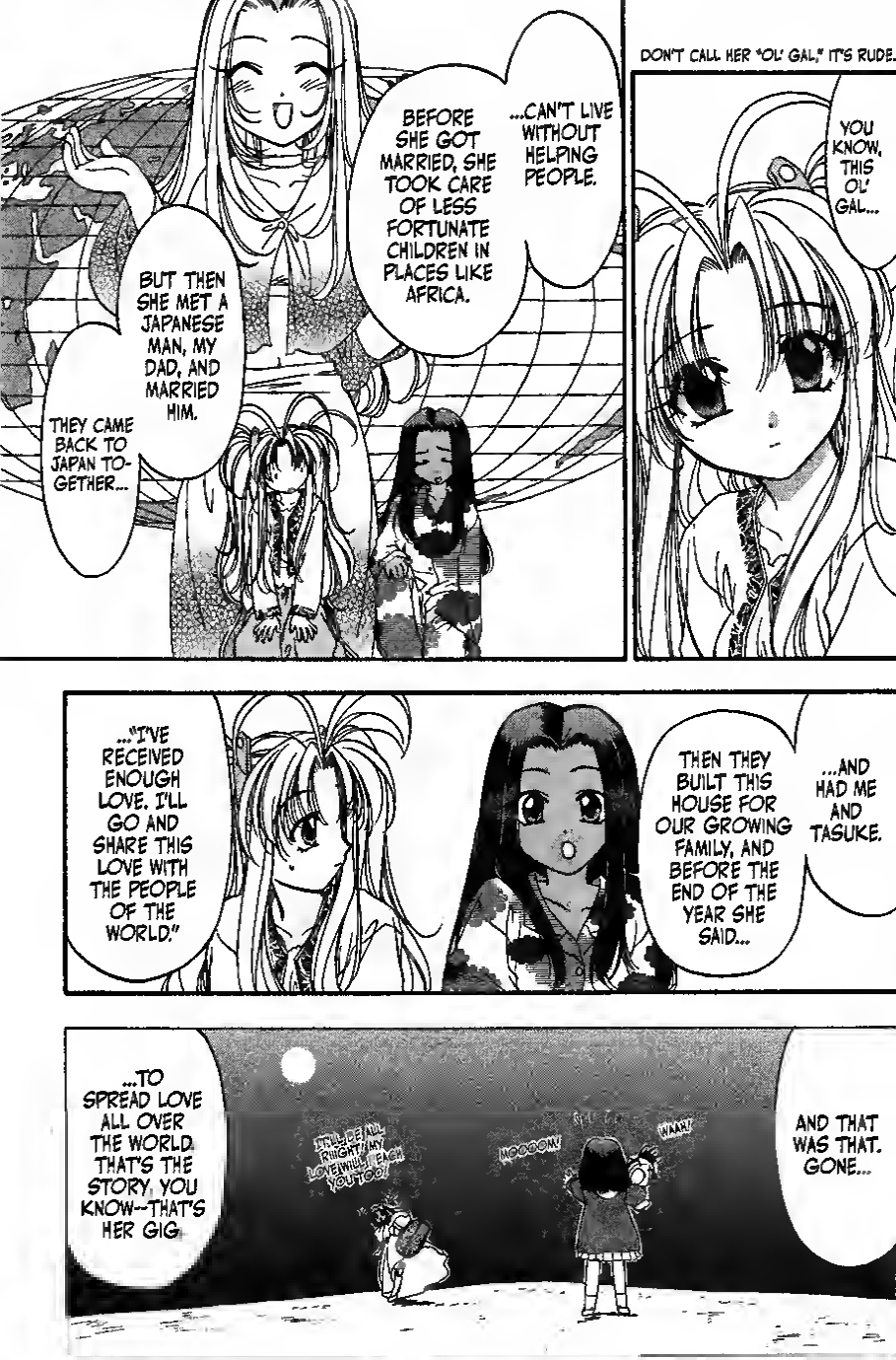

DON'T...
DON'T GO, MOM!!

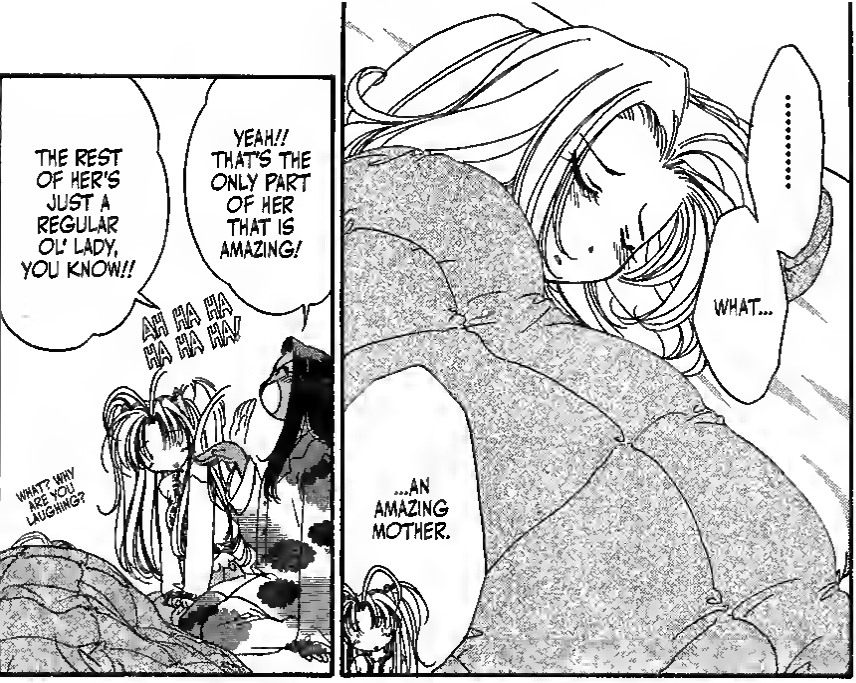


# CHAPTER 52
# FEELINGS DELIVERED BY THE MOON (PART TWO)

I SAID WAIT!!
MOM!!
ベシ
SHOCKING ENOUGH TO MAKE HER TRIP.
I GUESS IT REALLY WAS A BIG SHOCK...
...THAT SHE WAS FORGOTTEN.
NNGH. TASUKE! TASUKEEEEEE! TAASUUKEEE!

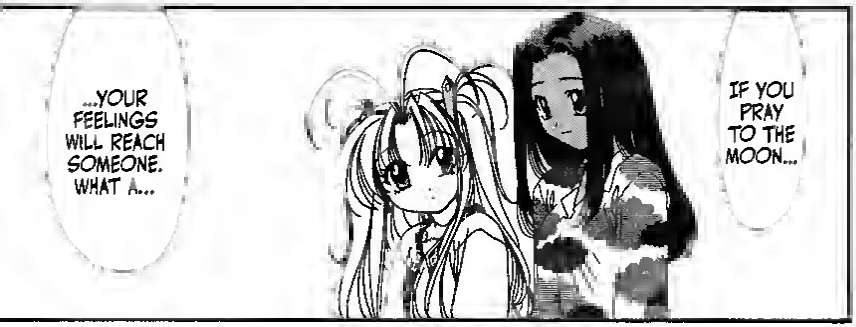

...YOUR ROOM, SHAO.
NNGH.
...WE TOOK OVER...
SORRY...
SHAO'S ROOM
OH, NO.
IT'S REALLY MISS SAYURI'S ROOM.
"MISS SAYURI"?
...SPENT MUCH TIME AT OUR HOUSE ANYWAY.
SHE NEVER...
THIS IS SHAO'S ROOM.
OH! DON'T BE SILLY!

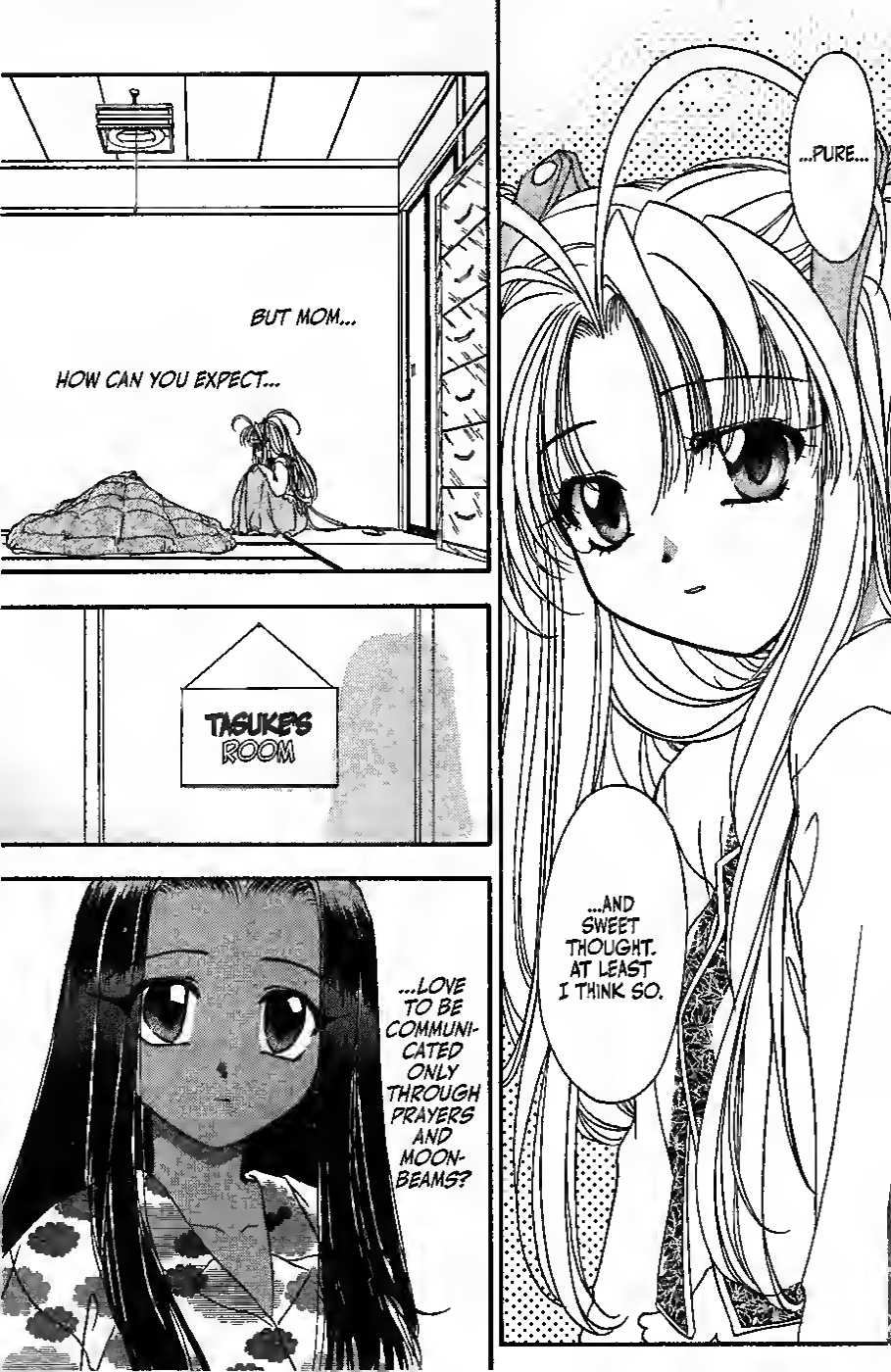

...CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT HELPING PEOPLE.
BEFORE SHE GOT MARRIED, SHE TOOK CARE OF LESS FORTUNATE CHILDREN IN PLACES LIKE AFRICA.
BUT THEN SHE MET A JAPANESE MAN, MY DAD, AND MARRIED HIM.
THEY CAME BACK TO JAPAN TO-GETHER...
DON'T CALL HER "OL' GAL," IT'S RUDE.
YOU KNOW, THIS OL' GAL...
...AND HAD ME AND TASUKE.
THEN THEY BUILT THIS HOUSE FOR OUR GROWING FAMILY, AND BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR SHE SAID...
..."I'VE RECEIVED ENOUGH LOVE. I'LL GO AND SHARE THIS LOVE WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD."
...TO SPREAD LOVE ALL OVER THE WORLD. THAT'S THE STORY, YOU KNOW--THAT'S HER GIG.
I'LL BE FINE RIGHT? AND I LOVE YOU TOO!
WOOOOW!
WAAA!
AND THAT WAS THAT. GONE...


.....
WHAT...
...AN AMAZING MOTHER.
YEAH!! THAT'S THE ONLY PART OF HER THAT IS AMAZING!
THE REST OF HER'S JUST A REGULAR OL' LADY, YOU KNOW!!
AH HA HA HA HA HA!
WHAT? WHY ARE YOU LAUGHING?

SHE'S NOT NORMAL AT ALL.

BUT YOUR ODDNESS IS ALSO RATHER AMAZING

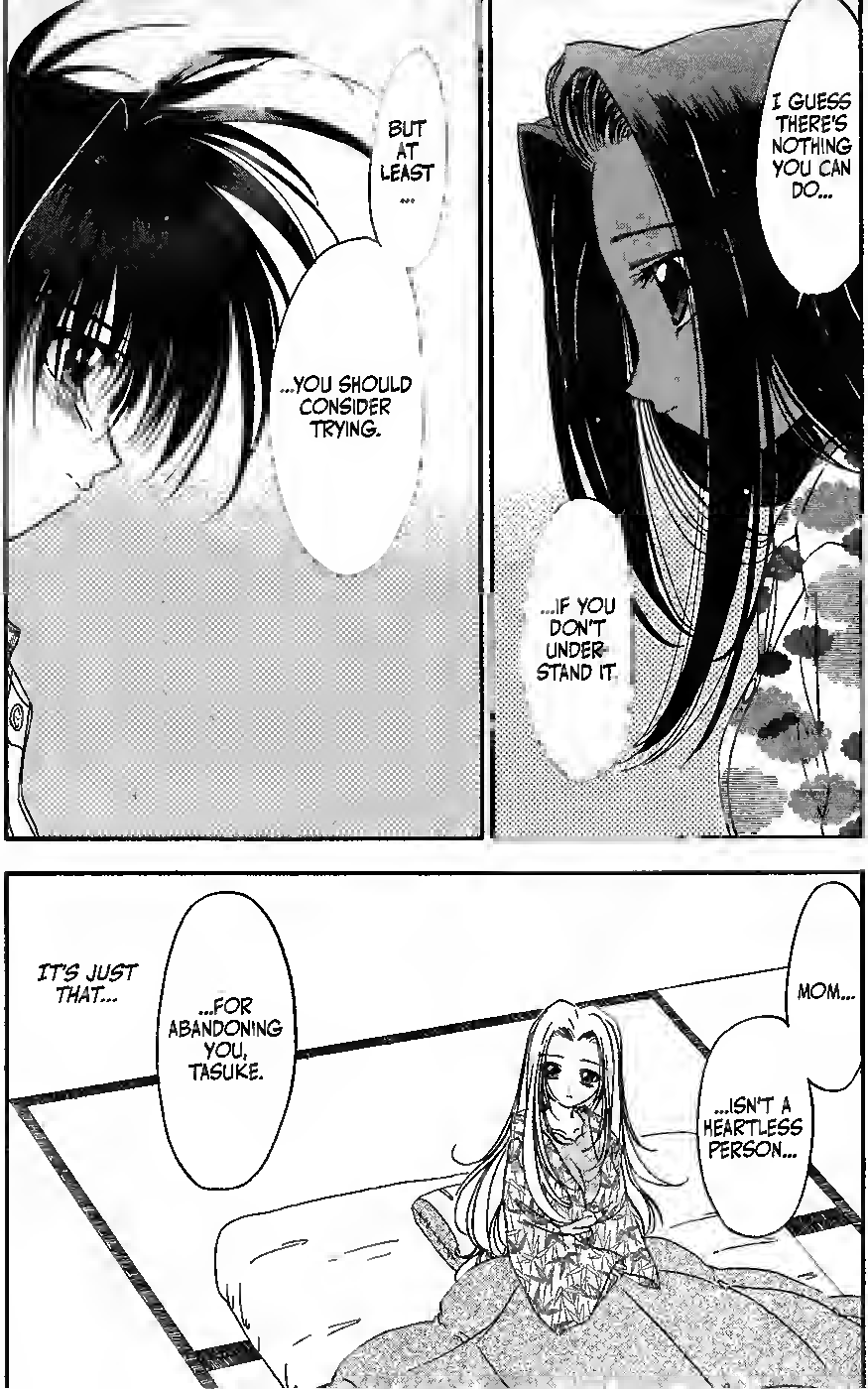


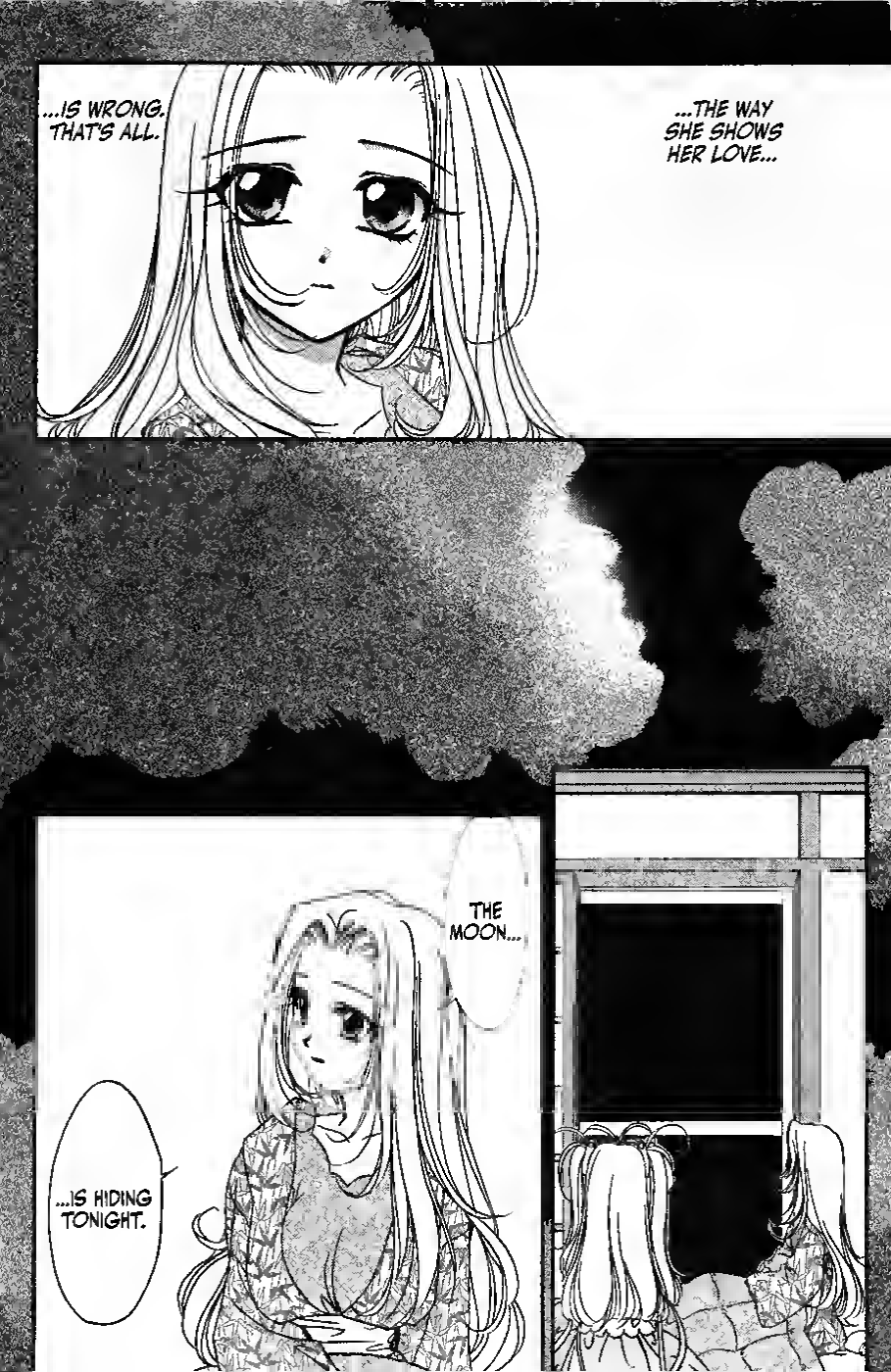

...PURE...
...AND SWEET THOUGHT. AT LEAST I THINK SO.
...LOVE TO BE COMMUNI-CATED ONLY THROUGH PRAYERS AND MOON-BEAMS?
TASUKE'S ROOM
BUT MOM...
HOW CAN YOU EXPECT...

HMM...
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT YOU'D REMEMBER BY YOURSELF?
パチパチ
YOUR BIG SISTER IS IMPRESSED.
OF COURSE, YOU ARE MY YOUNGER BROTHER
パチ
I DIDN'T REMEMBER, EXACTLY.
I JUST KIND OF HAD A FEELING.
AFTER THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU WERE ACTING AND ALL
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD REMEMBER!! SHE LEFT WHEN I WAS ONE!
OOH, SO BLUNT...
YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE MOM CRY.
WELL, SHE'S ALREADY CRYING...
I THINK I'M...
...THE ONE WHO WANTS TO CRY.

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, I THOUGHT IT WAS WEIRD...
...THAT I DIDN'T REMEMBER MOM.
SO LONG ...
SHE WAS GONE SO LONG THAT I FORGOT HER, BUT...
...NOW SHE SUDDENLY SHOWS UP, LIKE, "HEY, I'M YOUR MOTHER."
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO.

TASUKE.
MOM HASN'T SAID SHE'S YOUR MOTHER, HAS SHE?
YOU HAVE TO UNDER-STAND...
...MOM HAS HER OWN WAY...
...OF DOING THINGS.

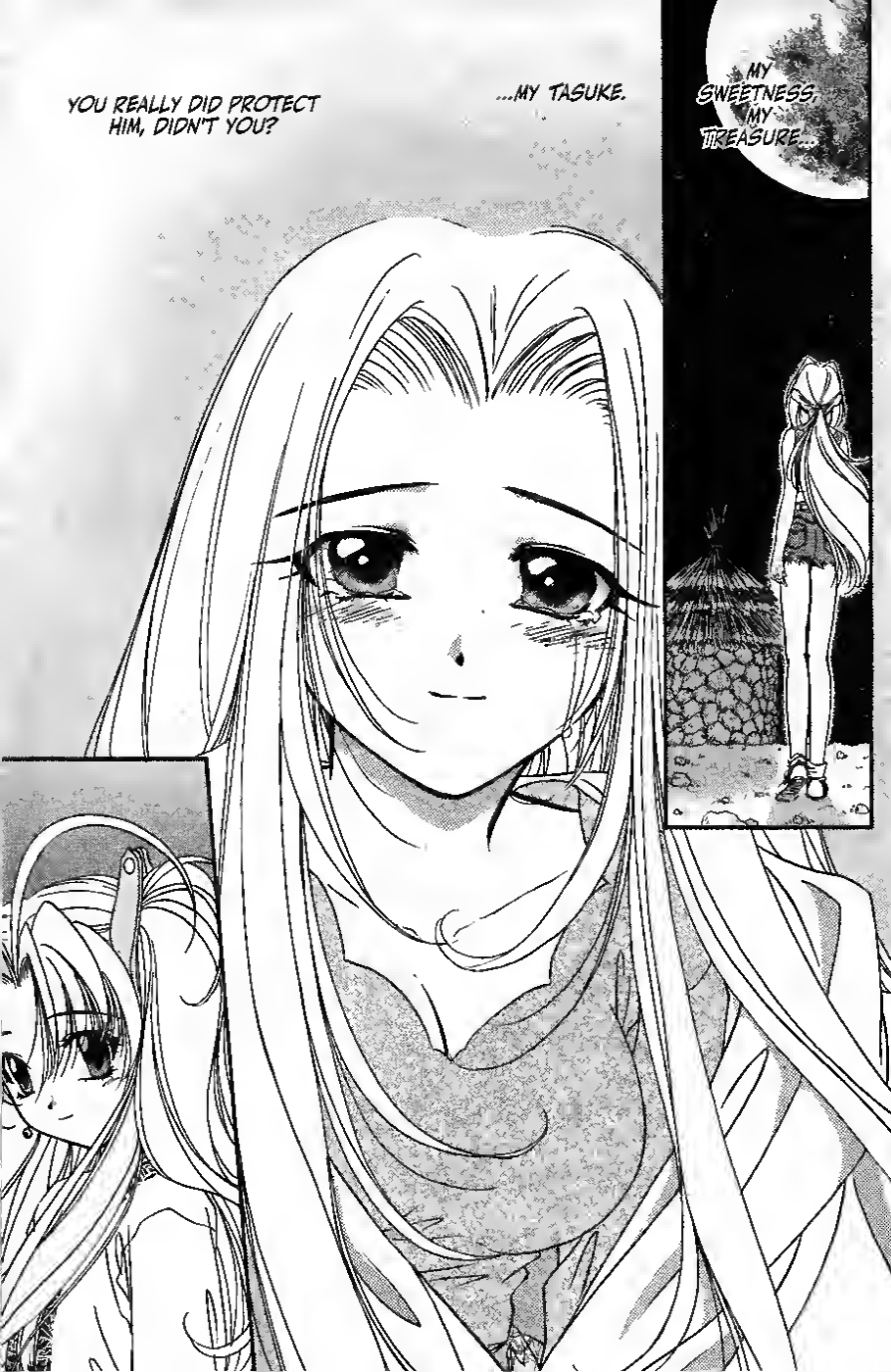

I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO...
...IF YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND IT.
BUT AT LEAST ...
...YOU SHOULD CONSIDER TRYING.
MOM...
...ISN'T A HEARTLESS PERSON...
IT'S JUST THAT...
...FOR ABANDONING YOU, TASUKE.


...IS WRONG. THAT'S ALL.
...THE WAY SHE SHOWS HER LOVE...
THE MOON...
...IS HIDING TONIGHT.

"IF YOU PRAY TO THE MOON...
...YOUR FEELINGS WILL REACH SOME-ONE." WHAT A...
THAT'S RIGHT ...
MISS SAYURI !!
EEK! EEEK!
IT'S SO PRETTY!

I'M A SHUGO-GETTEN.
A SPIRIT OF THE MOON.
OH! GOOD-NESS! HOW CAN YOU DO THIS?
SHAO, WHAT ARE YOU?
AN ANGEL?
A WHAT...?
OH... SEE?
PLEASE LOOK, MISS SAYURI.
THERE'S THE MOON.
IT'S NOT HIDING AT ALL!

LISTEN TO THIS, MOM!!
TASUKE, THAT LITTLE SCOUNDREL...
...IS LIVING WITH A WOMAN! AT HIS AGE, HE'S ALREADY BROUGHT A WOMAN HOME!
MY!
SURPRISING, RIGHT?
AND!! OF ALL THINGS...
...HER NAME'S SHAO AND SHE'S SUPER CUTE.
THAT'S WHY...
...YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY AT ALL ABOUT HIM!!
YES, MY LOVE...
...MIGHT REALLY HAVE REACHED THE MOON.


YOU REALLY DID PROTECT HIM, DIDN'T YOU?
...MY TASUKE.
MY SWEETNESS, MY TREASURE...

MASTER TASUKE.
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
YEAH, SURE.
MASTER TASUKE ...
...WHAT DO YOU THINK OF YOUR MOTHER?

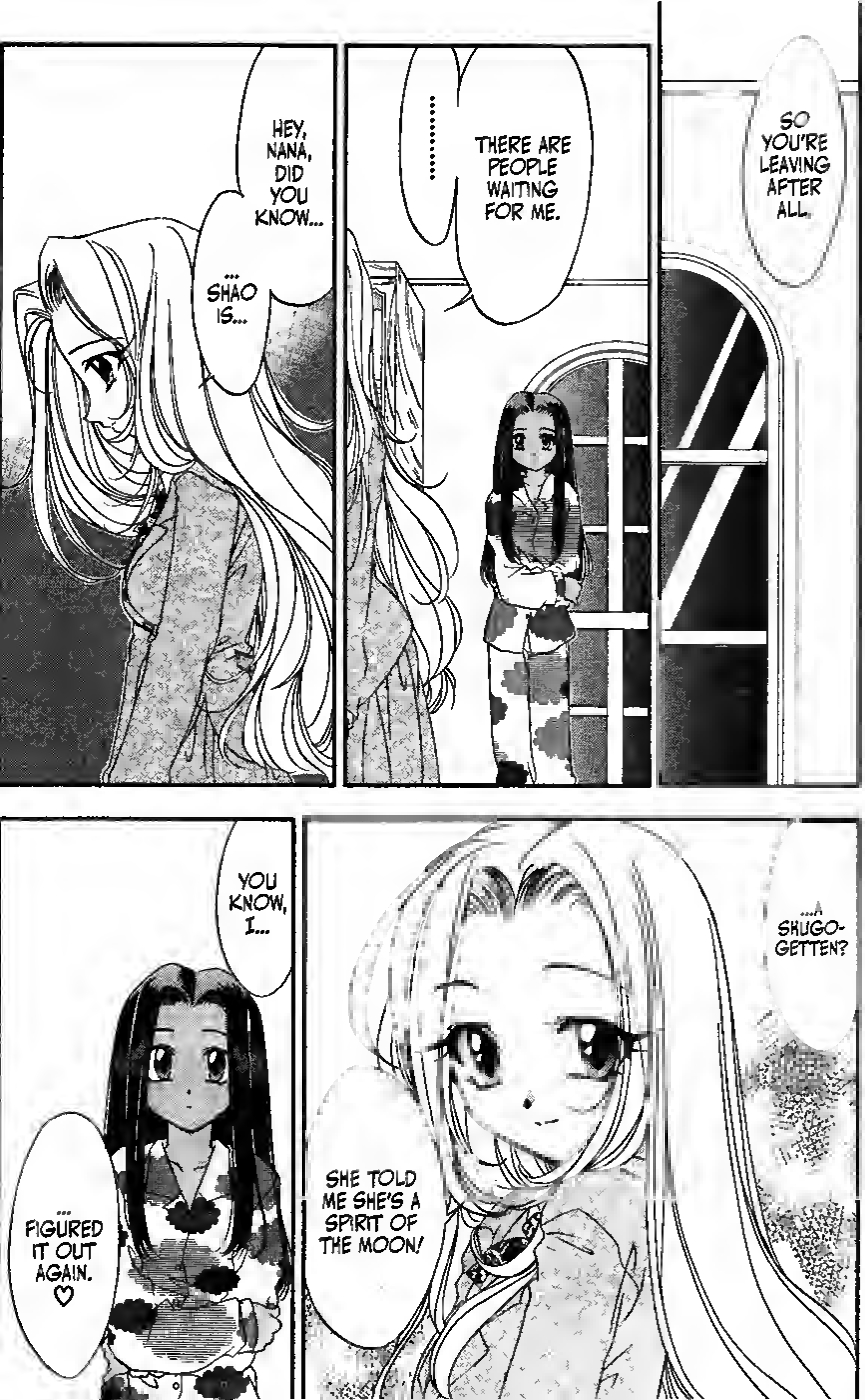
I WAS MAD AT HER...
...I THINK. BEFORE, THAT IS.
RIGHT NOW...
...I WANT TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON SHE IS.
OR...
...I THINK THAT'S WHAT I THINK.
BUT I'VE NEVER REALLY TALKED TO HER, SO...
...I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TALK TO HER
THAT MIGHT BE WHY

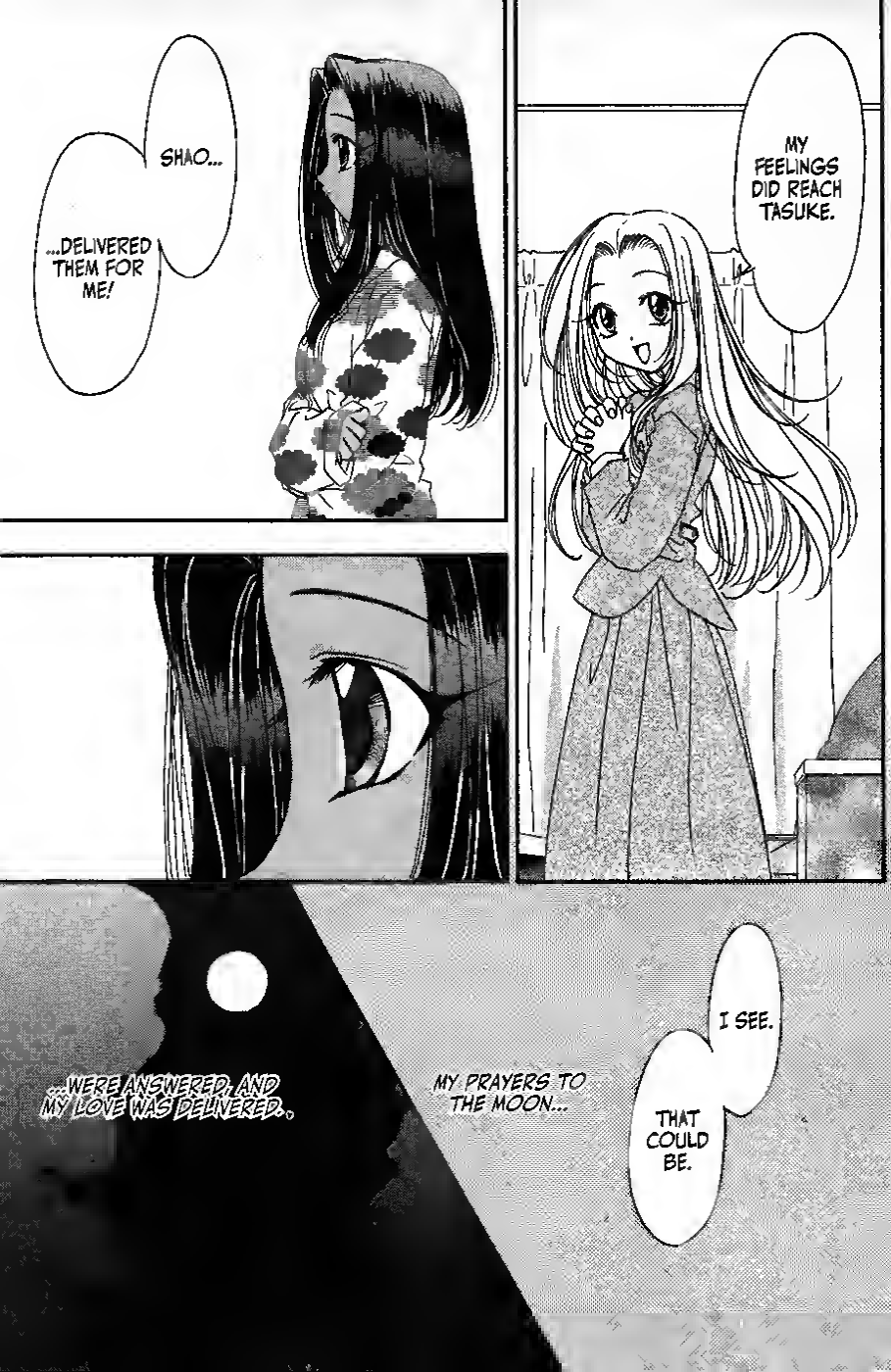
...I'M PRETEND-ING...
...TO BE MAD AT HER NOW.
"...NOW SHE SUD-DENLY SHOWS UP, LIKE..."
"...'HEY, I'M YOUR MOTHER.' I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO."
WHAT...?

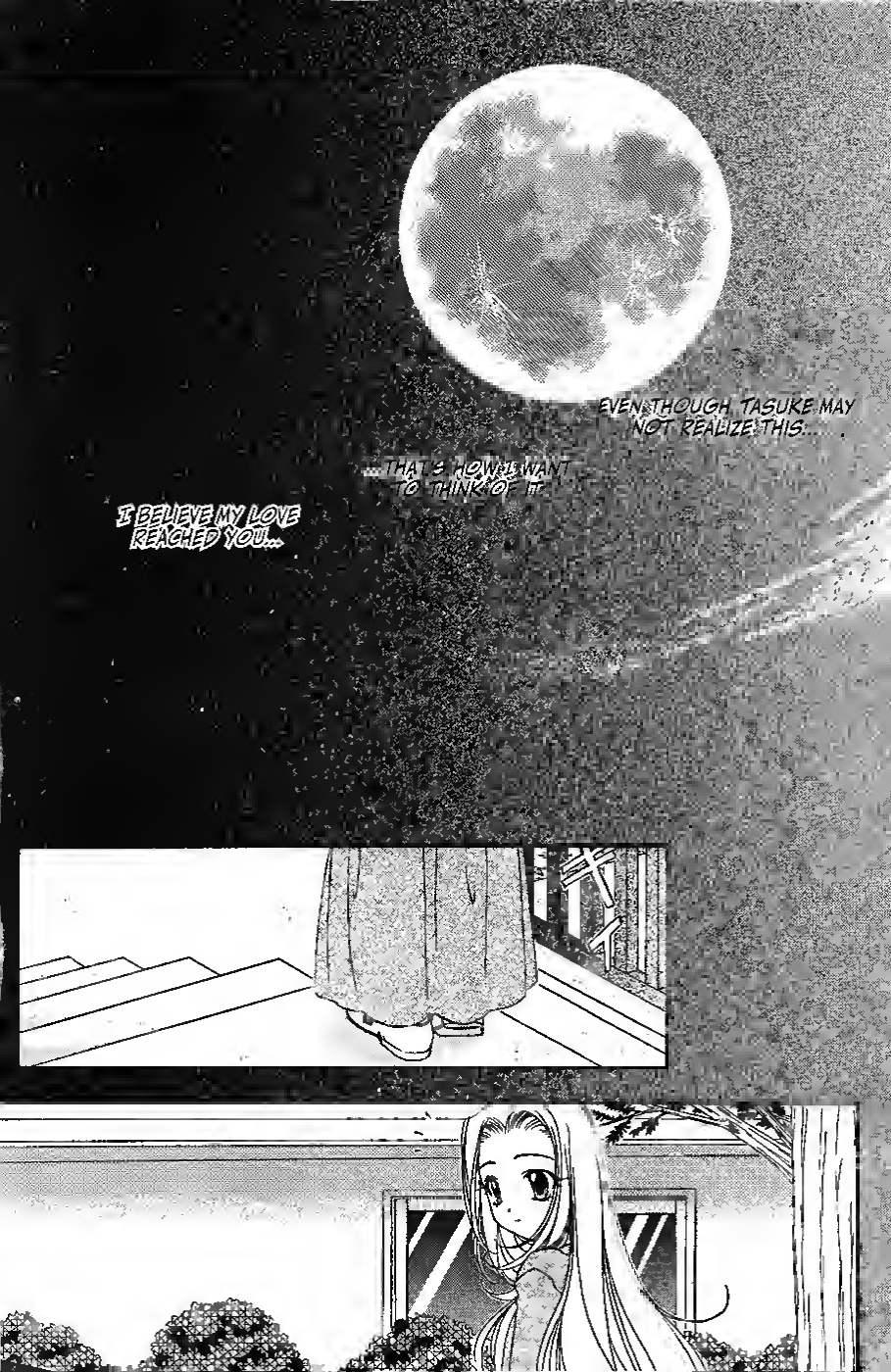
I...
...I UNDERSTAND THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN YOUR SOUL...
...VERY WELL.
...AM HERE BECAUSE...

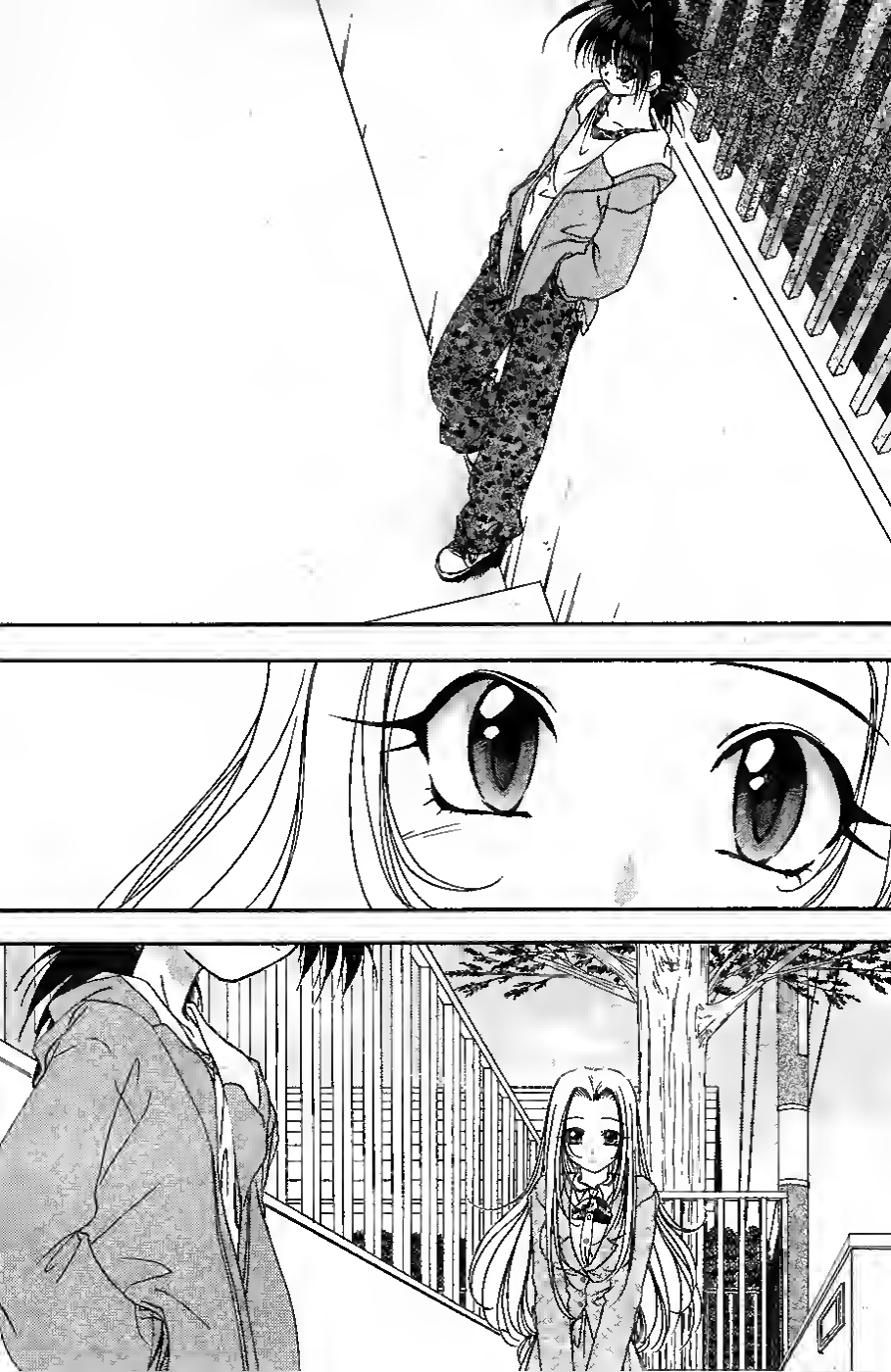
MASTER TASUKE!
WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT...
...REACHED MY HEART.
...NOT YOUR WORDS...
BECAUSE YOUR FEELINGS...
...IT'S THOSE FEELINGS OF WANTING TO KNOW YOUR MOTHER.
...ISN'T WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY...

SEE, MASTER TASUKE?
PLEASE, I WANT YOU TO REALIZE THAT.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T TALK...
...YOU CAN COMMUNI-CATE...
...WITH YOUR FEELINGS.


SO YOU'RE LEAVING AFTER ALL.
.....
THERE ARE PEOPLE WAITING FOR ME.
HEY, NANA, DID YOU KNOW...
...SHAO IS...
...A SHUGO-GETTEN?
SHE TOLD ME SHE'S A SPIRIT OF THE MOON!
YOU KNOW, I...
...FIGURED IT OUT AGAIN. ♡

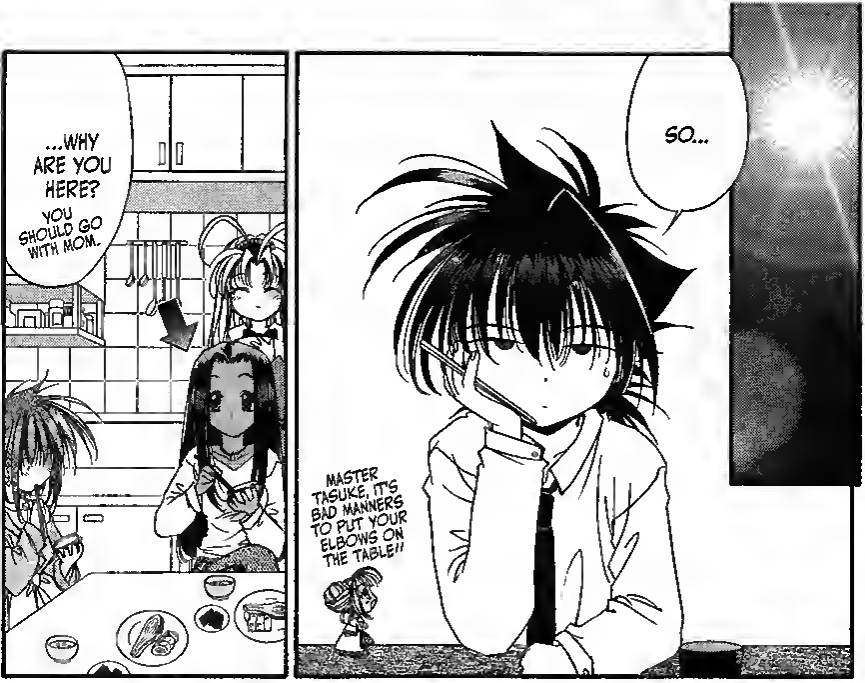

MY FEELINGS DID REACH TASUKE.
SHAO...
...DELIVERED THEM FOR ME!
I SEE.
THAT COULD BE.
MY PRAYERS TO THE MOON...
...WERE ANSWERED, AND MY LOVE WAS DELIVERED.


EVEN THOUGH TASUKE MAY NOT REALIZE THIS...
...THAT'S HOW I WANT TO THINK OF IT.
I BELIEVE MY LOVE REACHED YOU...

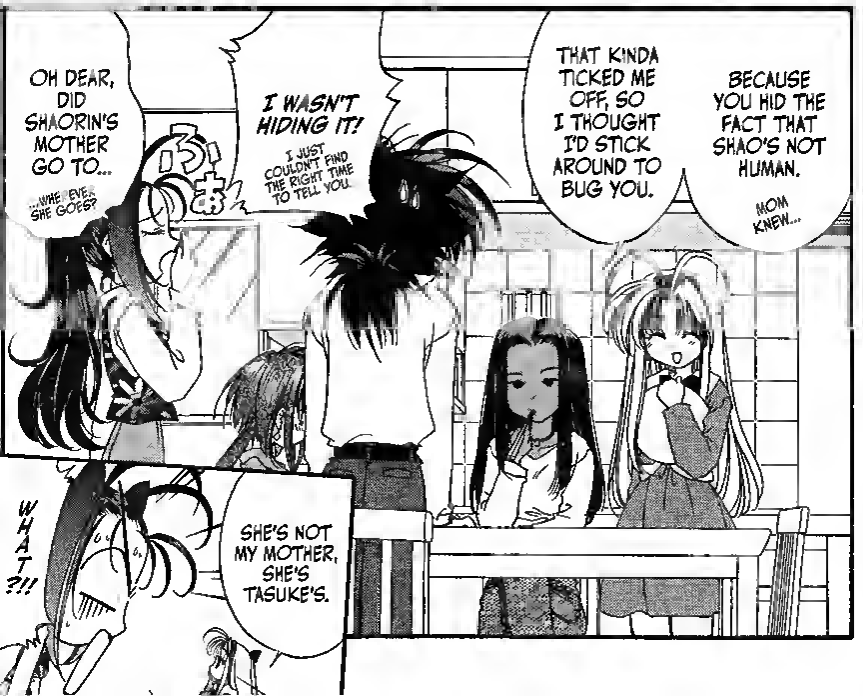


DO YOU BELIEVE THAT EVEN WHEN YOU'RE FAR AWAY ...
...THERE ARE CERTAIN FEELINGS THAT CAN STILL REACH YOU?
TASUKE!!

SHAO...
...SAID SOME-THING LIKE THAT TOO.
.....
I KNEW IT!
THAT'S RIGHT!!
AND THEN THOSE FEELINGS REACH TASUKE!!
SHAO AND I ARE CONNECTED, YOU KNOW! ♡
?



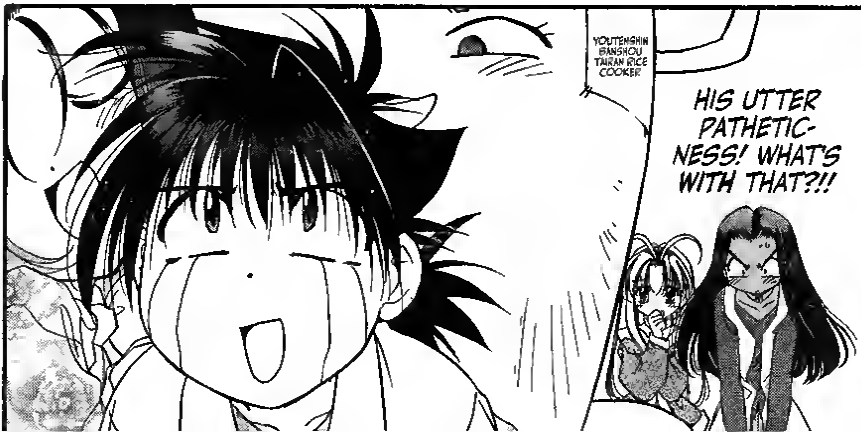

NANA IS SO SELF-ABSORBED EVEN SHE WOULD BE FORCED TO ADMIT IT!!


OH DEAR, DID SHAORIN'S MOTHER GO TO...
...WHEREVER SHE GOES?
I WASN'T HIDING IT!
I JUST COULDN'T FIND THE RIGHT TIME TO TELL YOU.
THAT KINDA TICKED ME OFF, SO I THOUGHT I'D STICK AROUND TO BUG YOU.
BECAUSE YOU HID THE FACT THAT SHAO'S NOT HUMAN.
MOM KNEW...
WHAT?!!
SHE'S NOT MY MOTHER, SHE'S TASUKE'S.

# CHAPTER 53
# OPERATION: SHAO'S METAMORPHOSIS INTO A NAÏVE YOUNG GIRL! (PART ONE)

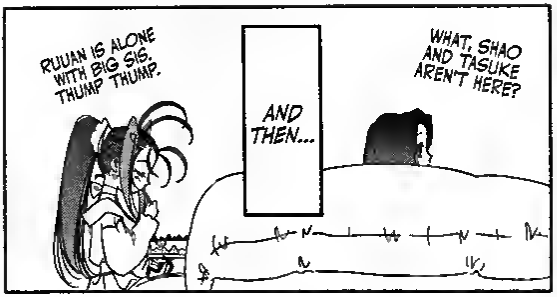
MY DEAR HOUSE.
MY BELOVED BROTHER AND MY BROTHER'S...
MAYBE I'LL START CLEANING UP THE YARD EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.
...G.I.R.L.F.R.I.E.N.D.♡
OH, WHAT A PEACEFUL SCENE.

OHNON
QUIT IT!!
BUT THEN HIS...
GROSS
HIS...!
OUR STORY IS A LOVE COMEDY, BUT
まだまだだな主ボス
ALONE TOGETHER. ♡
HIS...!!
...THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT FOR THE FIRST WEEK.
YEAH...

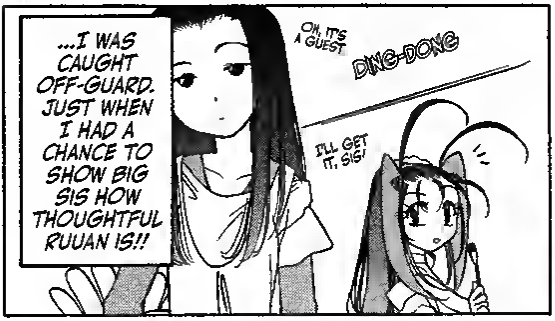

YOUTENSHIN BANSHOU TAIKAN RICE COOKER
HIS UTTER PATHETIC-NESS! WHAT'S WITH THAT?!!

HEY.
YOU THINK SO TOO?!
SO EVEN HIS SISTER AGREES
I FINALLY FOUND SOMEONE I CAN RELATE TO.
SIIIGH. I'M GLAD.
IT'S SO PATHETIC IT BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES.
IT'S FINE THAT MY DRIFTER SISTER IS STAYING AT HOME.
TASUKE'S ROOM
BUT...
AND I DON'T MIND THAT SOME GIRL FROM SCHOOL IS VISITING.
...STOP TALKING ABOUT ME IN MY ROOM!!
IGNORE HIM. I JUST IGNORE HIM.
HE'S SO NOISY.

OH NO, MASTER TAO'S C.R.A.N.K.Y. ♡
AAAARGH, GET OFF OF ME!!
カリ
ぉぉ!!
OH MYYY, THEN...
...WE CAN GO TO RUUAN'S ROOM.
へとと
.....
MWA HA HA.
SHOUKO
...AND BIG SIS SENT HER OUT TO BUY SNACKS.
THE DELIN-QUENT GIRL...
WHY ARE YOU SITTING LIKE THAT?
WHATEVER, RUUAN. WHERE'S SHAO?
SIGH...
HOW WOULD I KNOW?
OH NO!! YOU DON'T KNOW?!
THAT SO...?
BUT WHY DID SHOUKO COME TO SEE NANA?
IT'D MAKE SENSE IF SHE CAME TO SEE SHAO, BUT...
TAO'S ROOM
HERE'S A GUY WHO DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING BUT SHAO.

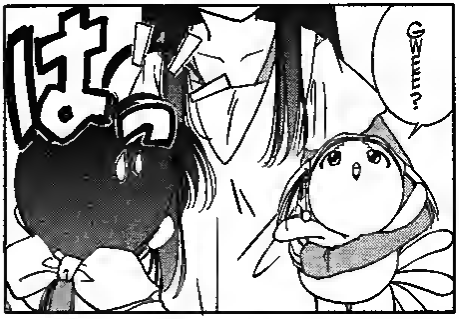

RUUAN IS ALONE WITH BIG SIS. THUMP THUMP.
AND THEN...
WHAT, SHAO AND TASUKE AREN'T HERE?

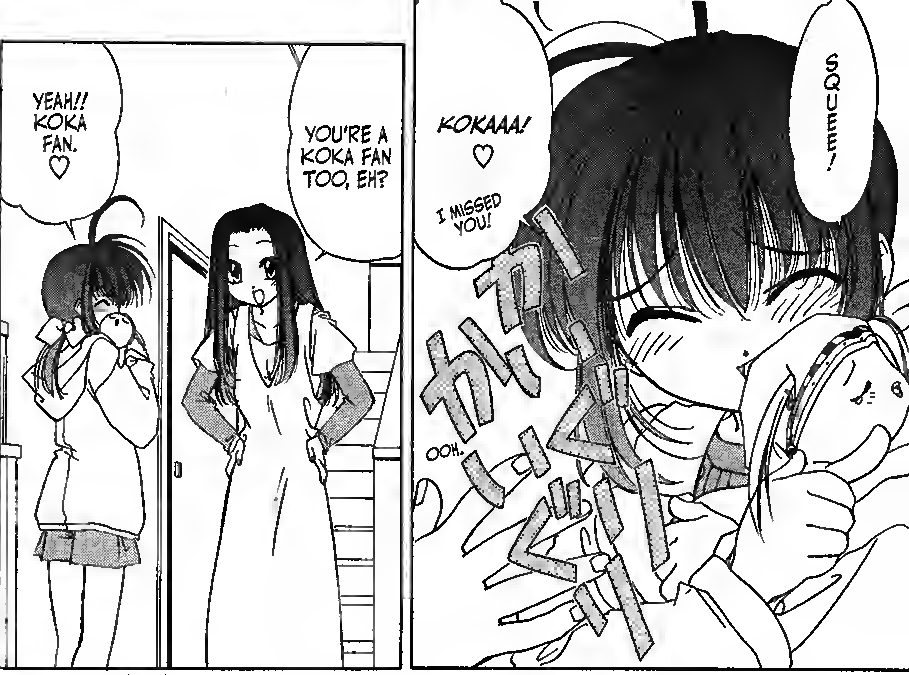
I THINK IT WAS ABOUT FIVE DAYS AGO...
TWEET
TWEET

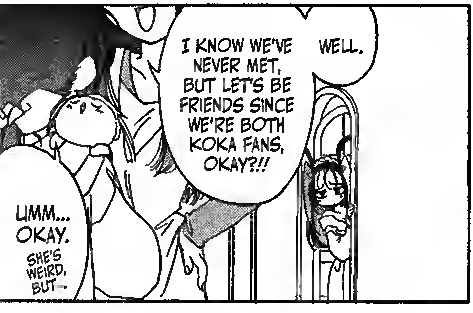

...I WAS CAUGHT OFF-GUARD. JUST WHEN I HAD A CHANCE TO SHOW BIG SIS HOW THOUGHTFUL RUUAN IS!!
OH, IT'S A GUEST.
DING-DONG
I'LL GET IT, SIS!

KOKA, DO YOU KNOW WHERE SHAO WENT?
.....

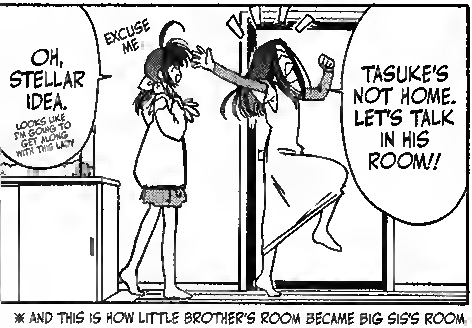
HUH?
IS SHAO HERE?
WHO'S "SIS"?


はっ
Qwuun?



WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT IT FITS A LOT IN ITS STOMACH, SO...
AH HA HA!
...NEXT TIME I GO ON A TRIP, I THINK I'LL BRING IT ALONG TO CARRY MY LUGGAGE. I'M LETTING IT GET USED TO ME NOW.
HEY. HEY.




※ AND THIS IS HOW LITTLE BROTHER'S ROOM BECAME BIG SIS'S ROOM

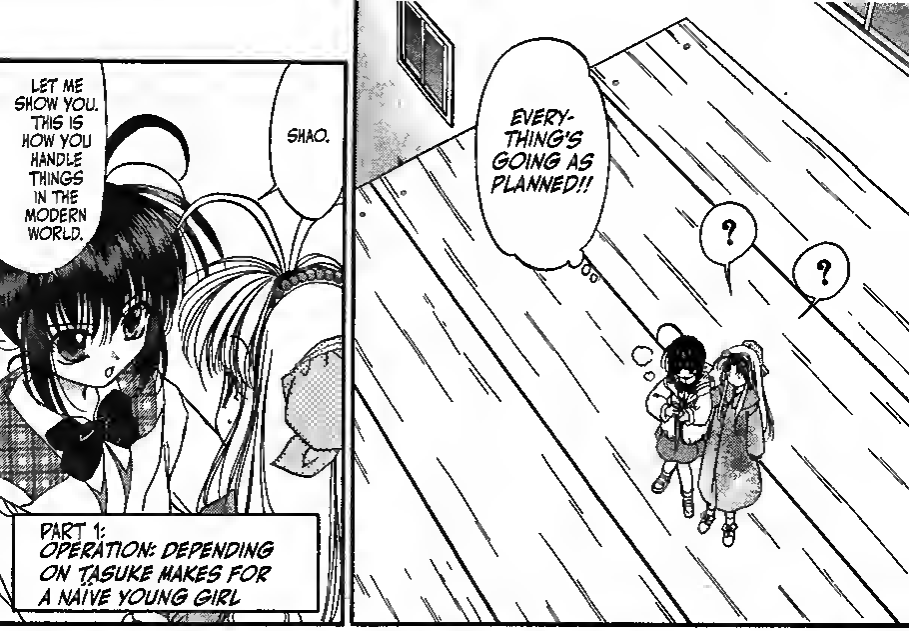
...THEY'RE FRIENDS, WHY WOULD SHOUKO COME OVER EVERY DAY?
EVEN IF...
SHE DOESN'T EVEN VISIT SHAO THAT OFTEN.
WHAT A WEIRD FRIEND-SHIP.
OH...
UMM...I WONDER...
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT US WE MUST BE LOVERS, RIGHT?
RIGHT? SOOO DIFFERENT FROM RUUAN AND MASTER TAA!!
IS SHE...
...UP TO SOME-THING?
HMM...
I SEE.

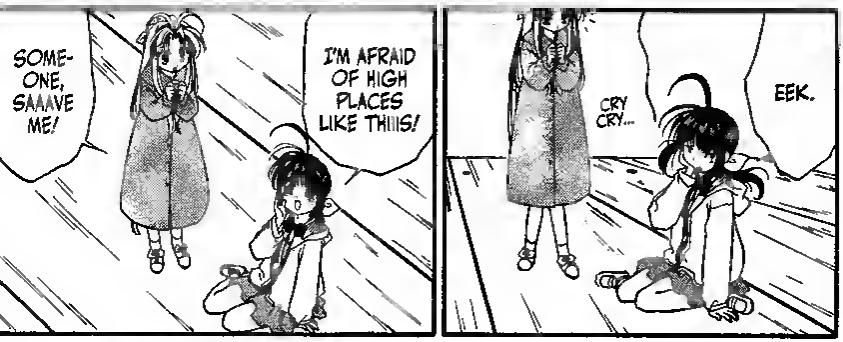
THEY'RE FRANK.
CHRISTMAS, EH? YOU'RE PLOTTING SOMETHING GOOD, AREN'T YOU?
...I WANT TO DO SOME-THING BEFORE THEN.
AND?
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO?
WELL...IN ONE WEEK IT'S GOING TO BE CHRISTMAS, SO...
NANA'S SCENARIO GOES LIKE THIS.
TEE HEE HEE ...
RIGHT, SHAO? HEY, SHAO, WHAT? WHAT?
THAT'S ME?
OOH... SHE'S GONE INTO TASUKE MODE?!
WHAT'S UP, SHAO? YOU'RE MIGHTY CHEERY TODAY.
JINGLE BELLS, OOH, TODAY IS CHRISTMAS EVE. ♡
A CHRISTMAS CAROL?
STILL A LITTLE STRANGE...
...IT'S CHRISTMAS EEEEVE.
I GUESS I'LL HUMOR HER (CONSCIENCE)
SECAMUSE, MASTER TASUKEEE..

OOH, SHAO...
YES.
YOU CALLED?
WHOOAA!
SLAM
PHEW!!
THIS GIRL REALLY IS A PRACTICED LIAR, ISN'T SHE?
WE WEREN'T CALLING YOU OR ANY-THING!!
OH, NO, NO. IT'S A WORD FOR GOOD LUCK, "OOHSHAO."
OH, OKAY.
ADMIRATION

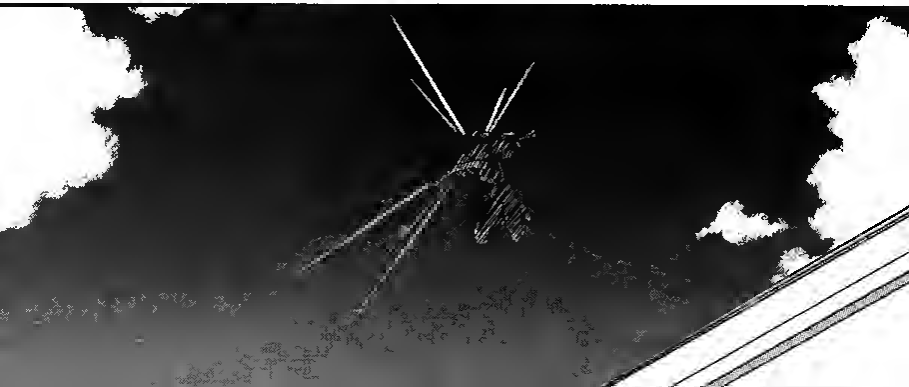
SHAO'S NAÏVE ENOUGH, BUT WE CAN'T LET TASUKE FIND OUT.
BUT THEN IF SHAO FINDS OUT WE'RE UP TO SOMETHING, SHE'LL TOTALLY TELL TASUKE.
THIS MUST BE A COVERT OPERATION.
ALL RIGHT, OUR TARGET IS CHRISTMAS EVE!!
WE'LL CALL IT "OPERATION SHAO'S METAMORPHOSIS INTO A NAIVE YOUNG GIRL"! COMMENCE OPERATION!!

BANSHOU...
...TAIRAN.
ギシィィ
EEE!
おおおお


LET ME SHOW YOU. THIS IS HOW YOU HANDLE THINGS IN THE MODERN WORLD.
SHAO.
PART 1: OPERATION: DEPENDING ON TASUKE MAKES FOR A NAIVE YOUNG GIRL
EVERY-THING'S GOING AS PLANNED!!
?
?

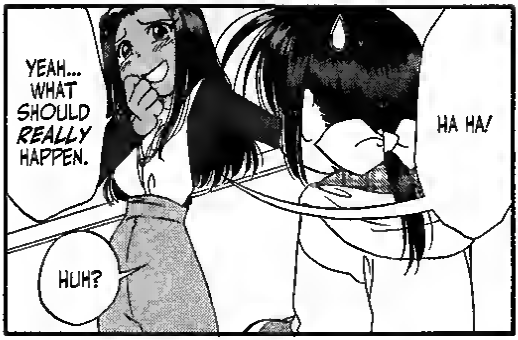



WHO SAID SHE CAN'T ACT?

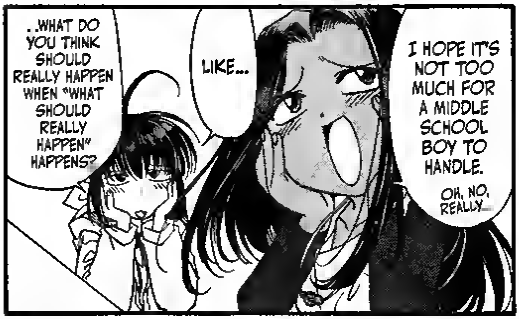


I'VE COME TO RESCUE YOU...
...MY LADY!!
ROLE OF TASUKE
...(IT'S COMPLI-CATED.)
IT'S SO LIKE SHAO TO BE CONVINCED BY SOME-THING LIKE THIS...
OH, I SEE!
THIS IS HOW MEN AND WOMEN ACT IN OUR TIME, SHAO!!
WHEN THE WOMAN'S IN TROUBLE, THE MAN RESCUES HER

PART 2:
OPERATION: NAÏVE YOUNG GIRLS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE WEAK
THESE CHOPSTICKS ARE SO HEAVY!
HUMP
PART 3:
OPERATION: NAÏVE YOUNG GIRLS DEPEND ON GUYS FOR STUDYING TOO
MASTER TASUKE, COULD YOU PLEASE HELP ME STUDY?
HUMP
PART 4:
OPERATION: OF COURSE, NAÏVE YOUNG GIRLS ARE SCAREDY CATS
KYAA!!
I'M AFRAID OF THE DARK!
SO FIRST WE'LL PLANT THE SEEDS OF HELPLESS GIRLISHNESS IN HER...
THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE.


YEAH... WHAT SHOULD *REALLY* HAPPEN.
HA HA!
HUH?

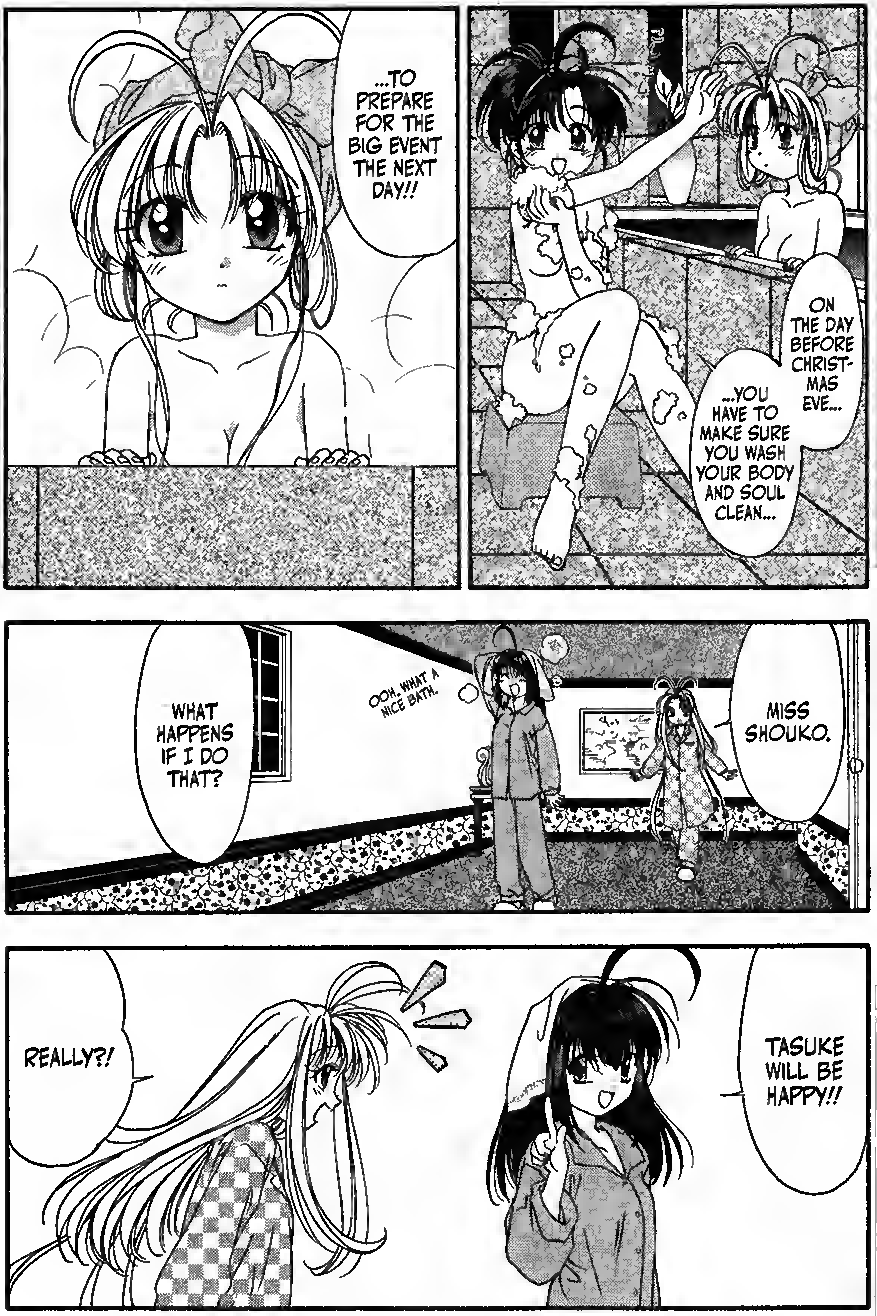
...AND THEN AFTER SHE'S BEEN INITIATED, WE'LL NONCHALANTLY SHOW HER HOW SHE'S REALLY SUPPOSED TO SPEND CHRISTMAS EVE.


..WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD REALLY HAPPEN WHEN "WHAT SHOULD REALLY HAPPEN" HAPPENS?
LIKE...
I HOPE IT'S NOT TOO MUCH FOR A MIDDLE SCHOOL BOY TO HANDLE.
OH, NO, REALLY...

EEEEK.♡
HMM. IS THIS TRULY A CHALLENGE?
SHOUKO YOU DIRTY GIRL!
NANA, YOU PERVERT!

AND SO, BY CHRISTMAS EVE...

HEY, NANA.
DO YOU KNOW WHERE SHAO WENT?
SHE WASN'T HERE WHEN I GOT HOME FROM SCHOOL.
MAKING DINNER SINCE NO ONE ELSE IS.
YEAH.
SHE'S GOING TO STAY OVER AT SHOUKO'S TONIGHT.
YOU AND SHOUKO ARE REALLY CLOSE, AREN'T YOU?
.....
THAT SO?
カポーン
OKAY, SHAO, IT'S LIKE THIS...
YAMANOUE

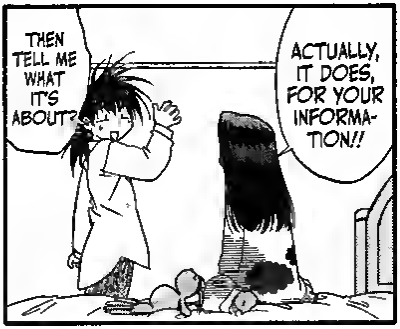

...TO PREPARE FOR THE BIG EVENT THE NEXT DAY!!
ON THE DAY BEFORE CHRIST-MAS EVE...
...YOU HAVE TO MAKE SURE YOU WASH YOUR BODY AND SOUL CLEAN...
OOH, WHAT A NICE BATH.
MISS SHOUKO.
WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO THAT?
TASUKE WILL BE HAPPY!!
REALLY?!

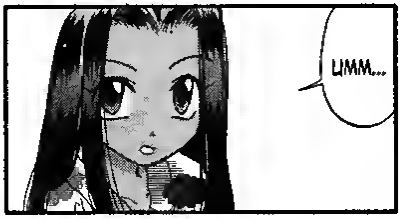
...WHEN YOU WAKE UP, FIRST...
...YOU SAY, "GOOD MORNING," WHILE YOU'RE STILL IN YOUR PAJAMAS.
BURRR IT'S COLD
AND THEN TO WELCOME CHRISTMAS EVE...
IT'LL MAKE TASUKE HAPPY!!
DOES THAT MEAN SOMETHING ALSO?
SIGH...
SHIC

SHE'S BEEN AT SHOUKO'S FOR FOUR DAYS! WHY DOESN'T SHE COME HOME?
YAAWN... HUH?
WELL, YOU KNOW HOW CLOSE SHAO AND SHOUKO ARE!
.....
"MASTER TASUKE."
"SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING."
TO: SHOUKO FROM: MOM
I GET THE FEELING THIS IS KINDA WRONG.
MASTER TASUKE WILL BE HAPPY.
MISS SHOUKO WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO DO?
...MAKE TASUKE HAPPY.
SHE NEEDS TO OVERDO IT A LITTLE BECAUSE TASUKE'S SO DARN DENSE.
NANA'S OPINION
IT'S NANA'S FAULT.
PASSING RESPONSIBILITY!

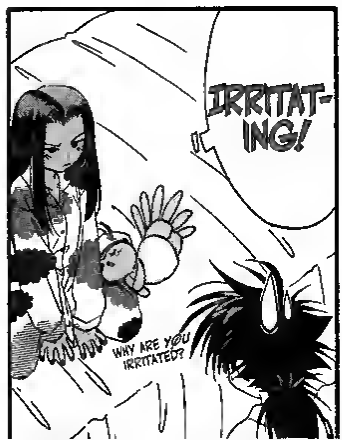
I KINDA...
...GOT THAT IMPRESSION BEFORE TOO.
MAYBE NOT QUITE WRONG, BUT...
...I GET THE FEELING SOMETHING BASIC IS MISSING.
WH-
WHAT?
YOU SUDDENLY KNOW EVERY-THING ABOUT EVERY-THING?
IT DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU ANYWAY, NANA!!

TELL ME SOME-THING.
DO YOU REALLY LIKE SHAO?


THEN TELL ME WHAT IT'S ABOUT?
ACTUALLY, IT DOES, FOR YOUR INFORMA-TION!!

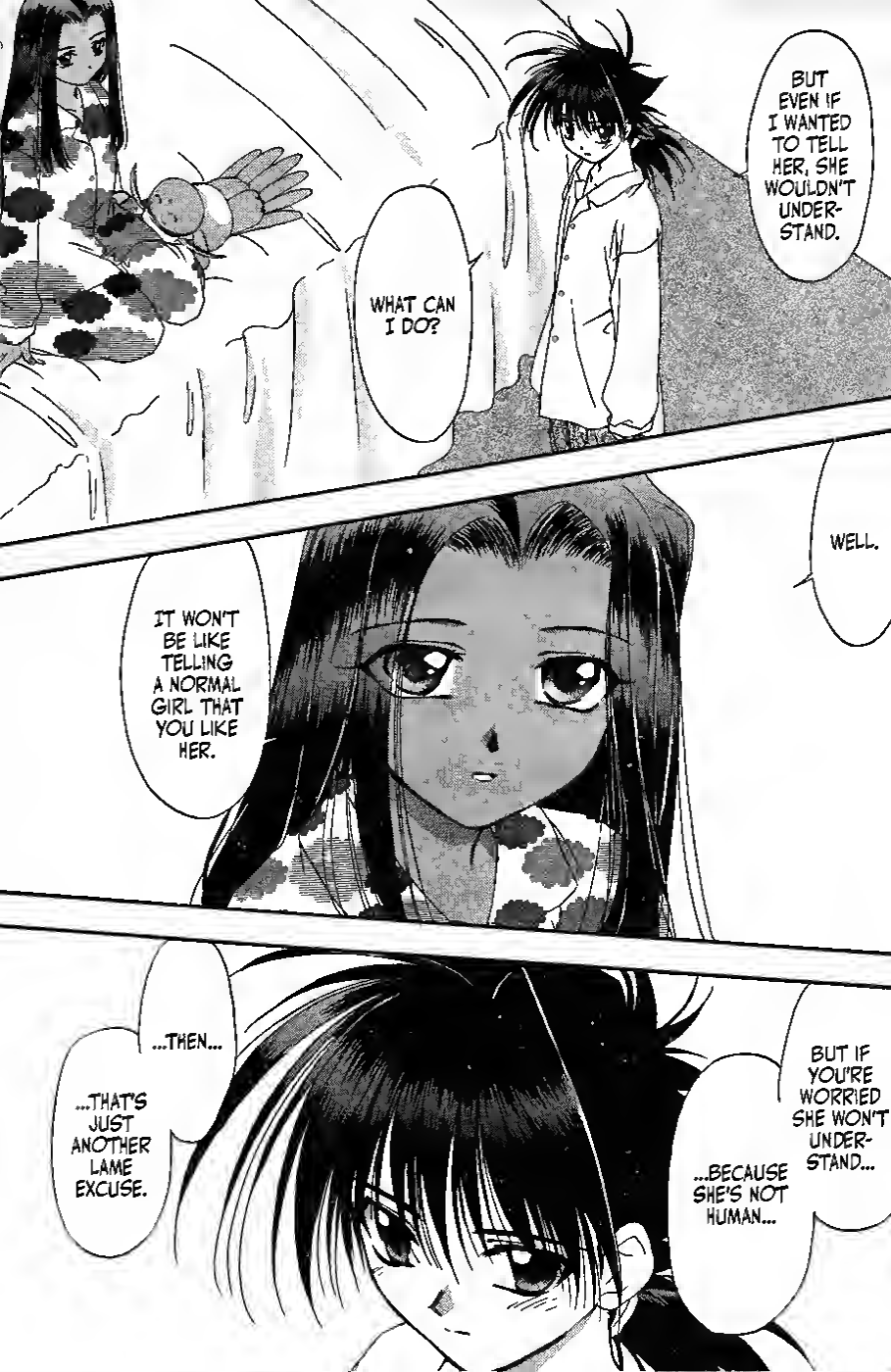

UMM...

.....


IRRITAT-ING!
WHY ARE YOU IRRITATED?

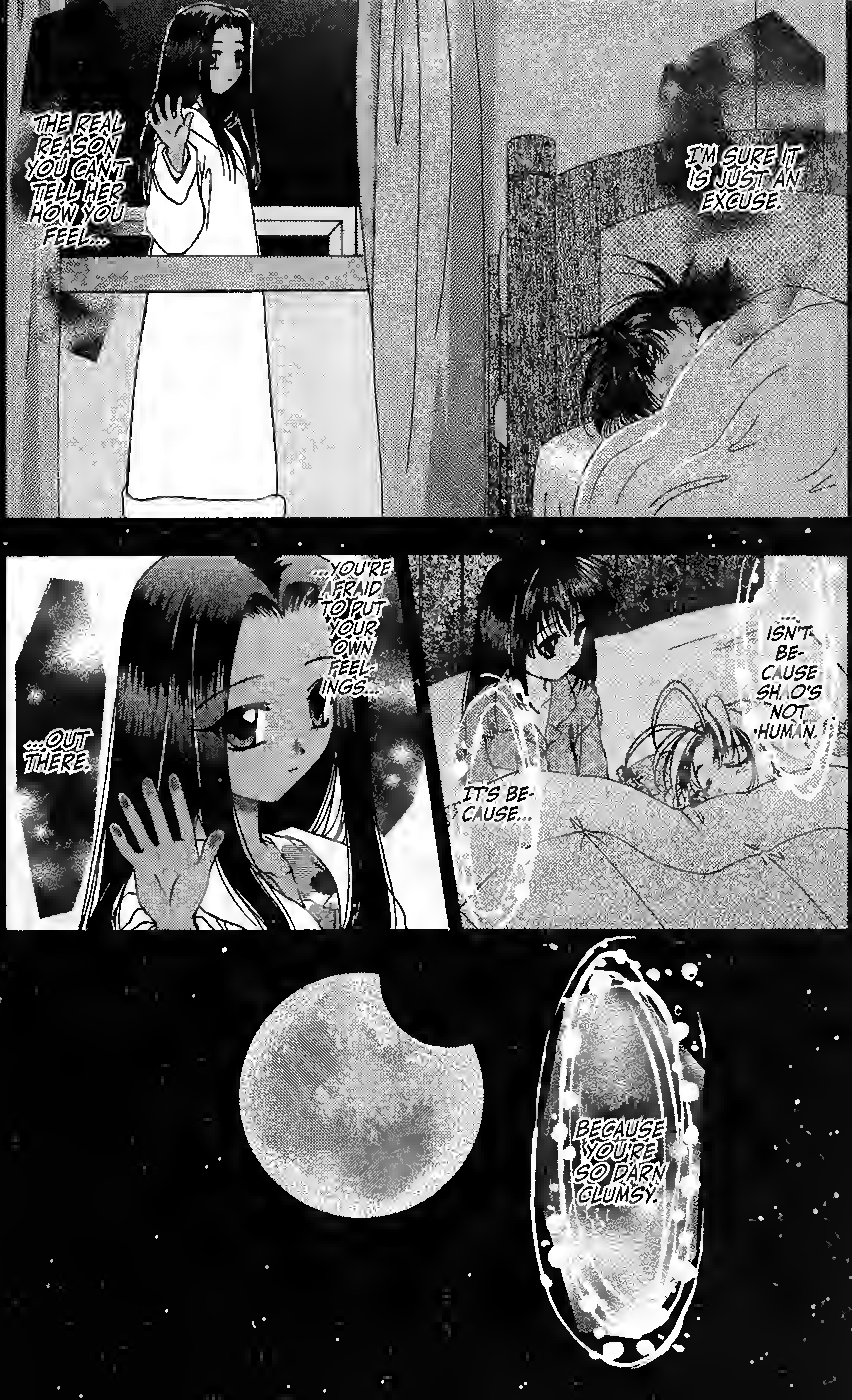
...YEAH.

SO WHY...
...DON'T YOU TELL HER HOW YOU FEEL?
I DON'T REMEMBER RAISING YOU TO BE SUCH A PANSY
I DON'T UNDER-STAND THAT.
WHAAT ?!!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEVER MAKES SENSE!!
LEAVE ME ALONE.
OH.
YOUR ATTITUDE IS TOTALLY NOT CUTE
I DON'T REMEMBER BEING RAISED BY YOU AT ALL!
I AM...
...PERFECTLY AWARE...
...THAT THINGS AREN'T GOOD THE WAY THEY ARE.

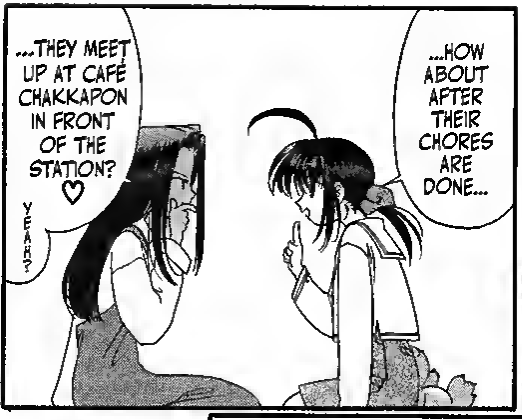

BUT EVEN IF I WANTED TO TELL HER, SHE WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND.
WHAT CAN I DO?
WELL.
IT WON'T BE LIKE TELLING A NORMAL GIRL THAT YOU LIKE HER.
...THEN...
...THAT'S JUST ANOTHER LAME EXCUSE.
BUT IF YOU'RE WORRIED SHE WON'T UNDER-STAND...
...BECAUSE SHE'S NOT HUMAN...

BUT POOR TASUKE...
...PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS.
THAT'S WHAT'S MISSING. SHAO CAN'T UNDERSTAND...
YAMANOBE
I BET THERE PROBABLY ARE THINGS SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND BECAUSE SHE'S NOT HUMAN.
IT MUST BE PRETTY IMPORTANT TO HIM THAT SHAO'S NOT HUMAN.
SIGH...MAYBE I SAID TOO MUCH.

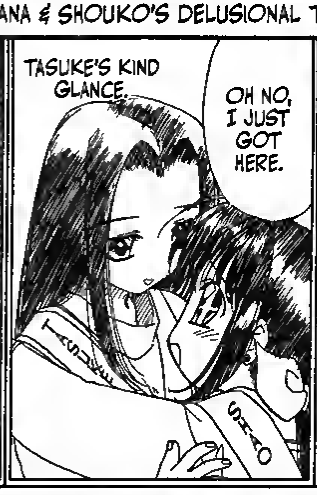
BUT... THAT IS...
SHE STILL ISN'T IN TOUCH WITH HER OWN FEELINGS ENOUGH TO RECOGNIZE...
...THE MOST IMPORTANT EMOTION-- LOVE.
TASUKE.

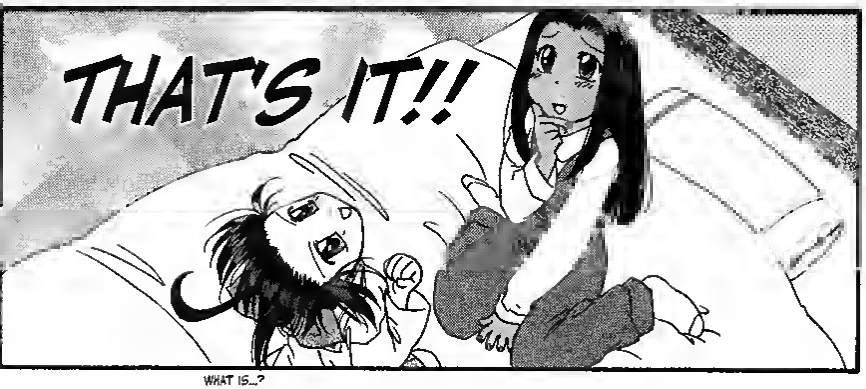

I'M SURE IT IS JUST AN EXCUSE.
THE REAL REASON YOU CAN'T TELL HER HOW YOU FEEL...
...ISN'T BE-CAUSE SH..O'S NOT HUMAN.
IT'S BE-CAUSE...
...YOU'RE AFRAID TO PUT YOUR OWN FEEL-INGS...
...OUT THERE.
BECAUSE YOU'RE SO DARN CLUMSY.

OH WOW, SHOUKO ...
...YOU'VE GOT MASSIVE BAGS UNDER YOUR EYES.
NOT SLEEPING WELL?
SO, ANYWAY ...
...LET'S MAKE PLANS FOR TOMORROW.
YOU DON'T LOOK SO HOT YOURSELF, NANA.
ARE YOU OKAY?
MASTER TASUKE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO SHOPPING?
YEAH, I'LL GO! I'LL GO!
.....
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN.
.....
NOW WHAT?
WHAT ALL WE GOING TO DO?



## NANA & SHOUKO'S DELUSIONAL THEATRE



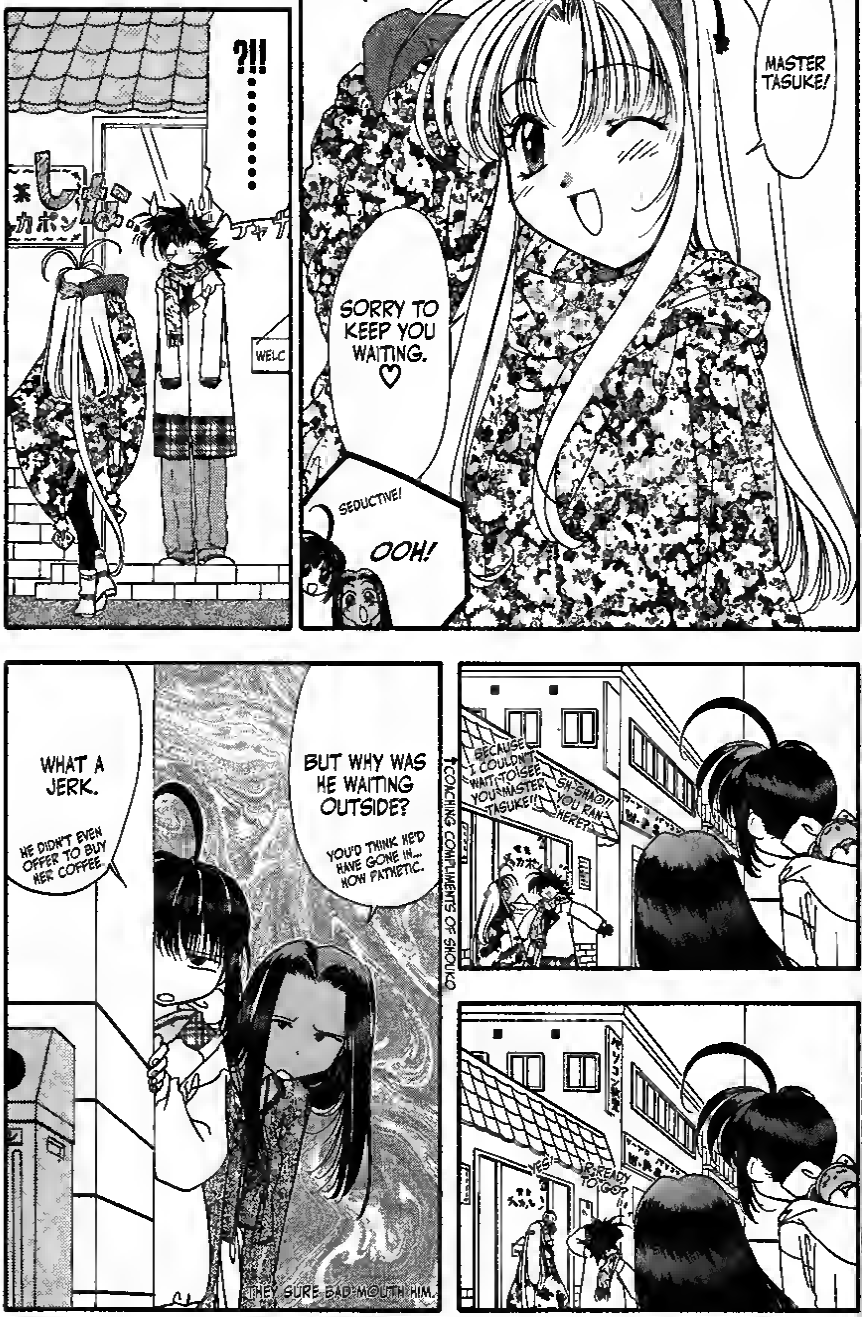


YAY!
AND AFTER THAT...
YAY!
TA DAA.
...CHRIST-MAS EVE!!
IT'S ...
MO--
MORNING !!
PLEEP PLEEP?
THUMP THUMP
MASTER TASUKE
GOOD MORNING!!
YES!!
GOOD GOING, SHAO
SPENT THE NIGHT

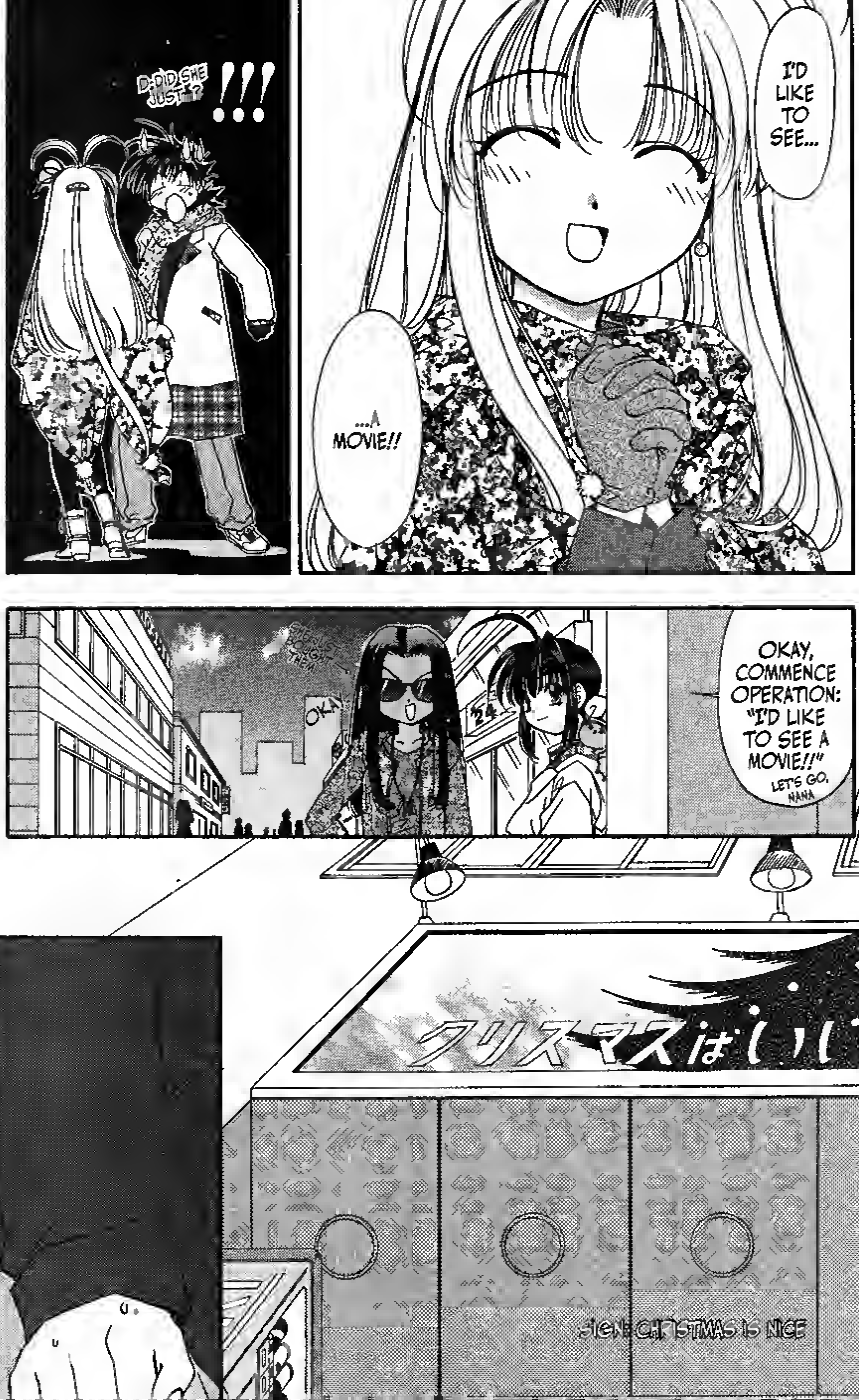
SAY, MISS SHAO.
MY LIEGE GOT DRESSED UP AND WENT OUT. IS SOMETHING HAPPENING TODAY?
YES.
WE'RE GOING TO MEET UP!!
OKAY!!
OPERATION: THEY FINALLY COME TOGETHER ON CHRISTMAS DAY!! COMMENCE!!

# CHAPTER 54
# OPERATION: SHAO'S METAMORPHOSIS INTO A NAÏVE YOUNG GIRL! (PART TWO)

OPERATION: THEY FINALLY COME TOGETHER ON CHRISTMAS DAY!! SHAO RUNS (CUTELY) TO THEIR MEETING PLACE.
OOH, HERE SHE COMES!! HERE SHE COMES!!
SHE'S GOT THE CUTE RUN DOWN, EH?
YOU GO, SHAO!
NANA, THEY'LL SEE YOU...


?!!
WELC
MASTER TASUKE!
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING. ♡
SEDUCTIVE!
OOH!
BECAUSE I COULDN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU MASTER TASUKE!!
SH-SHADI? YOU RAN HERE?
READY TO GO?
BUT WHY WAS HE WAITING OUTSIDE?
YOU'D THINK HE'D HAVE GONE IN... HOW PATHETIC.
WHAT A JERK.
HE DIDN'T EVEN OFFER TO BUY HER COFFEE
COACHING COMPLIMENTS OF SHOUKO.
THEY SURE BAD-MOUTH HIM.

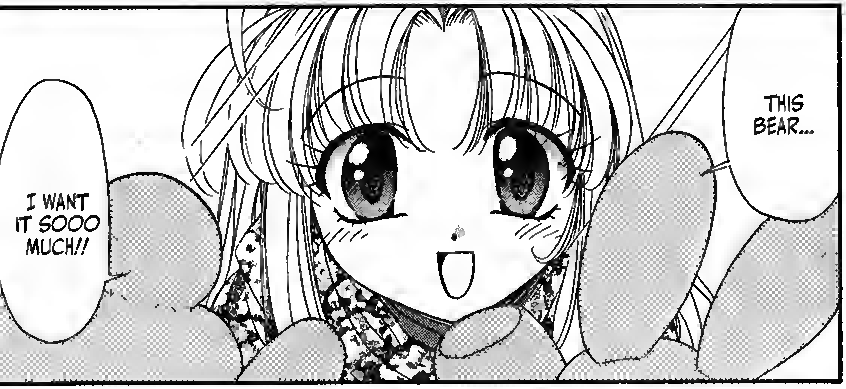
.....
MASTER TASUKE ...
MASTER TASUKE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO SHOPPING?
INVITE HIM NONCHALANTLY!!
HMM... YEAH.
YAY. ♡ THEN LET'S MEET AT CAFÉ CHAKKAPON AT THREE O'CLOCK!!
HUH? UH... YEAH.
IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE, AND...! WE'RE ALONE TOGETHER, AND...!!
WE'RE GOING SHOPPING...? WHAT A WASTE!!!
BUT WHY DID WE MEET UP LIKE THAT ON WEL...
MASTER TASUKE!
THIS IS ALMOST LIKE A DATE!!! AT LEAST WE COULD SEE A MOVIE OR SOMETHING.


I'D LIKE TO SEE...
...A MOVIE!!
D-DID SHE JUST-?
!!!
OKAY, COMMENCE OPERATION: "I'D LIKE TO SEE A MOVIE!!" LET'S GO, HANA
OKAY
クリスマスはいい
CHRISTMAS IS NICE

TELL ME YOU LOVE ME, LEONARD.
...DID SHE WANT TO SEE THIS MOVIE?
WHY...
LOOKS LIKE IT'S PRETTY AWESOME...
YOU HAVE TO PICK A ROMANTIC MOVIE WHEN YOU'RE ON A DATE!!
ちら...
TRUST

.....
WHIP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
SHE'S SO STRAIGHT-FORWARD, ISN'T SHE?
HOW WONDER-FUL.
?
?
SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO STARE AT HIM THE WHOLE TIME.
I DID TELL HER TO LOOK AT HIM...

MASTER TASUKE!!
WHAT?!


THIS BEAR...
I WANT IT SOOO MUCH!!

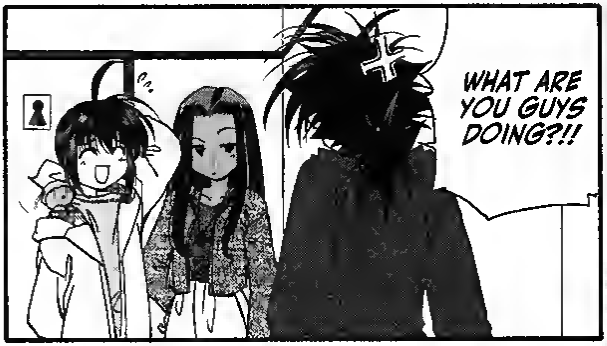
HE'S SO PATHETIC, HE'LL NEVER WIN HER ONE
I SHOULD'VE OMITTED THIS PART OF THE OPERATION
NOT GONNA HAPPEN.
MASTER TASUKE
OKAY, JUST LEAVE IT TO ME
NO DUH! HE'S TOTALLY CLUMSY.

.....

YOU GO!
AT LEAST HE'S GOT GUTS...
♪
WHAT'S NEXT?
MERMAID
NOTHING TO DO
THANK YOU
AND?
UMM, AND THEN NEEEXT...
YES!
THE ONE I MADE UP WHEN I WAS FALLING ASLEEP!!
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, IT WAS AT A RESTAURANT AND...
OH!
UMM...
DON'T CALL IT BRAINWASHING
I DON'T KNOW!!
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO BRAINWASHED HER WITH THESE PLANS

はっ
ゴソ
MASTER TASUKE.
THIS MEAT'S HELLA GOOD. STUFF YOUR FACE WITH IT...YUM!!
WHA--?!

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE, "THIS IS DELICIOUS!! OPEN WIDE"♡



YOU HAVE A NASTY ATTITUDE !!
DON'T TURN THIS AROUND ON ME!!
DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING BETTER TO DO?!!
EVER HEARD OF MINDING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?!
NOW, NOW!!
IT WAS A LITTLE SHADY, BUT...
NO NEED TO TEAR A FAMILY APART OVER IT
SO WHAAAT?!!
I'M YOUR BIG SISTER, YOU-KNOW!!

E'AM GAME
E'AM GAME

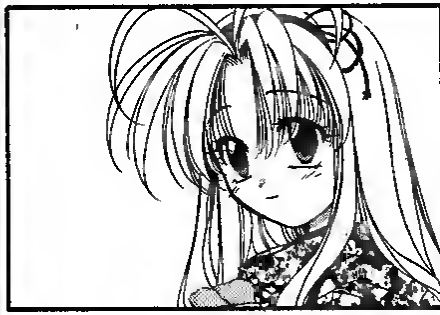
I HATE...
SIBLINGS ARE SO VIOLENT, AREN'T THEY?
ONLY CHILD
HUFF..
HUFF..
HUFF..
...THE WAY YOU...
...STUMBLE AROUND ALL INDECISIVE ALL THE TIME!!
!!!

I'M NOT EITHER, REALLY!
.....
WHO SAYS ...
...I'M STUMBLING AND INDECISIVE?
TODAY ...
...I DECIDED I'M FINALLY GOING TO TELL HER.

COTTON VELL
I CARE FOR SHAO. I FEEL IT SO STRONGLY.
I WANT HER TO UNDERSTAND.
I WANT TO TELL HER.
2F
THEY JUST MADE ME FEEL IMPATIENT.
500
500

MAYBE IF I TELL HER RIGHT NOW, SHE WILL UNDERSTAND.

BUT...



...SOMEHOW, WITHOUT WORDS, MY FEELINGS...
...MIGHT REACH HER.

...LIKE A NORMAL GIRL TODAY.
SHAO SEEMS SO MUCH...
OOH, YOU'RE RIIIGHT
WE DIDN'T TEACH HER TO DO THAT.
SHAO'S IMPRO-VISING!
WELL, AFTER ALL, IT IS CHRISTMAS EVE!
MAYBE SHE WILL UNDER-STAND.

IT'LL BE LIKE A PRE-SENT...
...FROM SANTA!!

OOOKAY...I'M GOING TO TELL HER!!!
HEY, SHAO...
I--
MASTER TASUKE.

...STARTED TEACHING ME...
...ALL KINDS OF THINGS, BEGINNING A WHOLE WEEK AGO.
YOU KNOW, MISS SHOUKO AND...
...MISS NANA...
MISS SHOUKO...
...SAID IT WAS BECAUSE IT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY.
.....
BUT...
...I DON'T THINK THAT WAS WHY.

...A NORMAL HUMAN GIRL...
...DIDN'T THEY?
THEY TAUGHT ME THINGS ...
...SO I COULD BE MORE LIKE...
OH...
... BUT ...
... UMM ...
BUT...
...IT'S ACTU-ALLY BEEN...
...A LOT OF...
...TO DO THINGS LIKE THIS.
I KNOW IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR SOMEONE IN MY POSITION...

...FUN.
THEY THOUGHT SO MUCH ABOUT ME...
...AND EVEN YOU, MASTER TASUKE.
I AM BEHAVING SO SELFISHLY, YET...
...YOU HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING.
AND IT MAKES ME VERY...
...HAPPY.

REALLY.
REALLY ...
MASTER TASUKE?
...

SHAO.
YES.

THAT'S GREAT!
YES!!

THEY'RE ACTING ...
..KIND OF STRANGE.
..YEAH.

THEN WE'LL START WITH THE GIFT EXCHANGE!
TAKASHI, AREN'T WE SUPPOSED TO START WITH A TOAST?!
THAT'S RIGHT!! THAT'S NOT IN THE END, TAKASHI!
COMMENCE CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT AT TASUKE'S HOUSE!!
OUR CHRISTMAS EVE TRADITION!!
POW
WHOA, WHAT ?!!!

TASUKE.
UMM...I CAME OUTSIDE 'CUZ I FEEL LIKE BEING ALONE RIGHT NOW...
.....
.....
WAS THAT UNNEC-ESSARY? WHAT...
...I DID?
HEY MOM. MOM, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?
SORRY...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
UMM, WHERE IS MASTER TASUKE?
SHE'S IN THE BATHROOM.

"...HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT." IS THAT WHAT YOU'D SAY?
"TASUKE'S A STRONG KID, SO..."
...IT MAKES ME FEEL BAD.
HE'S GOT SUCH A GOOD HEART AND HE'S SO KIND THAT...
THAT'S WHY HE'LL DEFINITELY BE REALLY HAPPY SOMEDAY, RIGHT?
WHAAAT, IT'S NOT LIKE I'VE BEEN REJECTED YET, YOU KNOOW!!
OKAY!! GOOD FOR YOU FOR SAYING THAT!!
SWOOSH
SIGH...YES BIG SIS, A PEKING DUCK FROM PEKING
MISS RUIJAN WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
LATELY, MISS RUIJAN'S THE MISTRESS OF PUNCHLINES

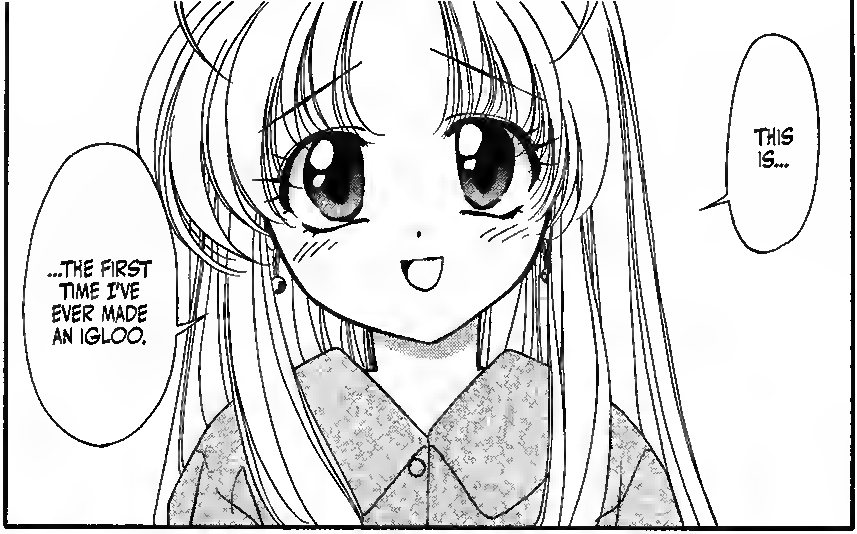
# CHAPTER 55
# SHINTO PRIEST OF INDECISION (PART ONE)

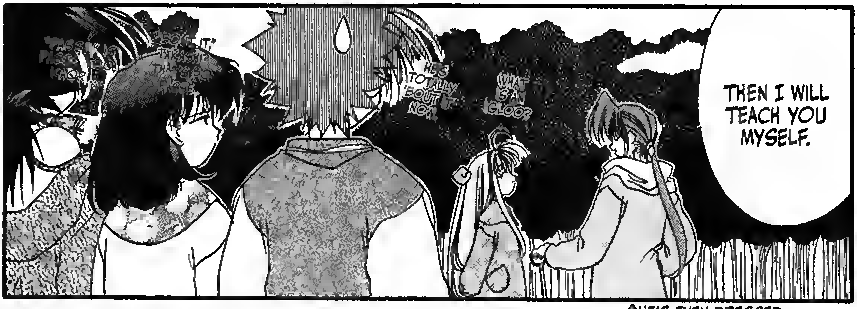
YES, THE SNOW...
...HAS COMPLETELY BLANKETED EVERYTHING.
I KNOW!
IT'S COVERED EVERYTHING THIS MUCH!!
IT'S THE PERFECT DAY...
...TO BUILD AN IGLOO!!
PLUS, TODAY'S SUNDAY! ♪

...DO YOU HAVE TO USE MY YARD?!!
WE CAN MAKE A HUGE IGLOO WITH THIS MUCH SNOW!
YAY!
GASP
TEE HEE
MAYBE IT IS, BUT WHY...
SIGH..
EH, I GUESS HE CAN'T HELP IT.
AND THE YARD AT SCHOOL IS ALREADY FULL OF SNOWMEN.
OH
THE SNOW HERE IS THE NICEST!!
MR. IZUMO, DON'T BE GREEDY.
NOW, PLEASE GO SOME-WHERE ELSE!!
THAT'S NOT MY PROB-LEM!

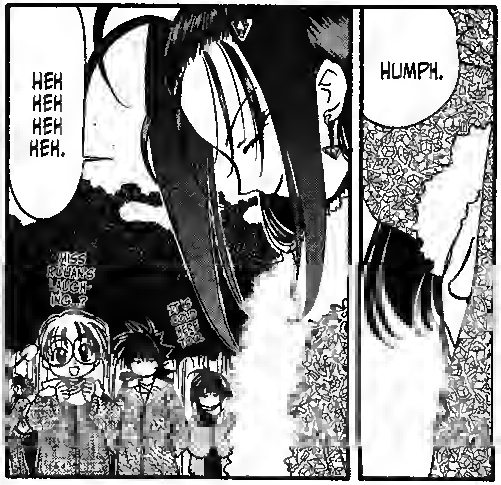
SHAO?
IT'S ME, TAKASHI!
WHAT...?
EXCUSE US!
OH.
MIYAUCHI
UMM, HEY, SHAO, WE'RE ACTUALLY AT IZUMO'S, AND...
WHAT IS IT?
YAWN. MR. TAKASHI?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO YELL, TAKASHI!!
TAKASHI, WHAT'S WRONG?!
SHAO! SHAO! OOH! SHAO!!

WHAT WAS THAT?
YAY, MR. IGLOO.
ガチャ
IT'S ALL WORKED OUT!
SHAO AND EVERY-ONE ARE COMING TOO!!
NOW YOU CAN'T COMPLAIN!!
LET'S GO, EVERY-BODY!!
LET'S MAKE THE BEST IGLOO.
YAY!
MIYAUCHI SHRINE




†HE'S EVEN DRESSED.

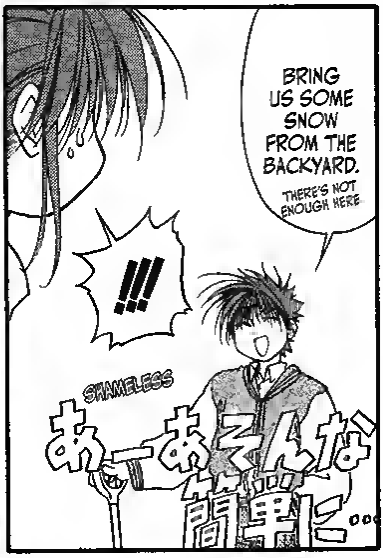


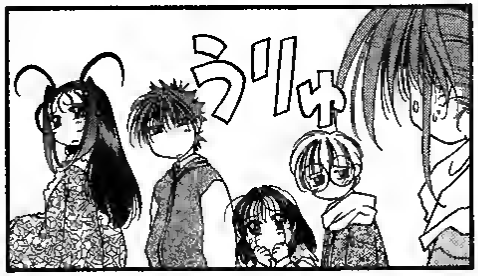
LET'S MAKE A CASTLE.
I'LL BE MISS RUUAN'S SERVANT.
WE'RE NOT PICKING ROLES, STUPID.
OOOH! I'M...
...GOING TO MAKE A PRINCESS'S ROOM! ♡
IS THAT REALLY WHAT YOU WANT, KOICHIROU?
I WOULD BE GRATE-FUL...
...IF IT HAD A KOTATSU.*

* A TABLE WITH A HEATER UNDERNEATH A COMFORTER COVER AND A HARD TOP ON TOP. IT KEEPS YOU WARM WHEN YOU SIT WITH YOUR LEGS IN THE COMFORTER.

OKAAAY!
おおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおおo
WHO NEEDS A CASTLE?! LET'S BUILD A BATTLE-SHIP!!
THAT MIGHT BE NICE TOO.
WHAAAT? I DON'T WANT TO.
I'M FIRED UP!!
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE IGLOO...?
SIGH... REALLY.
YAY!
YAY!
THEIR BEHAVIOR IS SO CHILDISH. AN ADULT LIKE ME CANNOT POSSIBLY, POSSIBLY--
HEY, IZUMO!!
"I-IZU-IZUMOOOOO?!!!"
I SAID HEY!
DID HE JUST CALL ME IZUMO?!

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!! YOU MUST BE KIDDIN--
WHAT?!


BRING US SOME SNOW FROM THE BACKYARD.
THERE'S NOT ENOUGH HERE
!!!
SHAMELESS
あーなそんな簡単に…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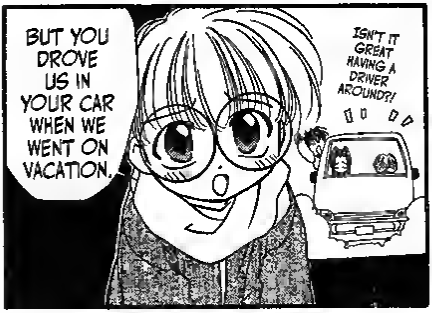
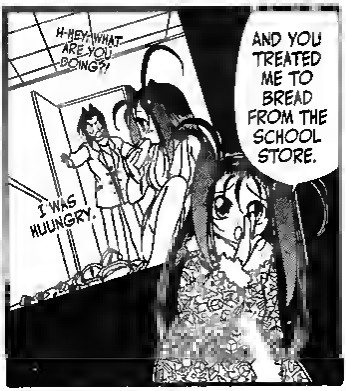

BUT YOU DROVE US IN YOUR CAR WHEN WE WENT ON VACATION.
ISN'T IT GREAT HAVING A DRIVER AROUND?!

JUST PASS-ING BY
YAY, MR. IZUMO, PERFECT TIMING!
BUT YOU HELPED ME CARRY MY GROCERIES THE LAST TIME WE WENT SHOPPING.

YOU'RE SUCH A
KIND OLDER BROTHER.

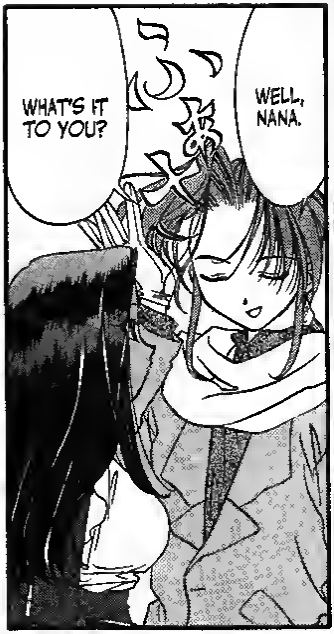

H-HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I WAS HUUNGRY.
AND YOU TREATED ME TO BREAD FROM THE SCHOOL STORE.

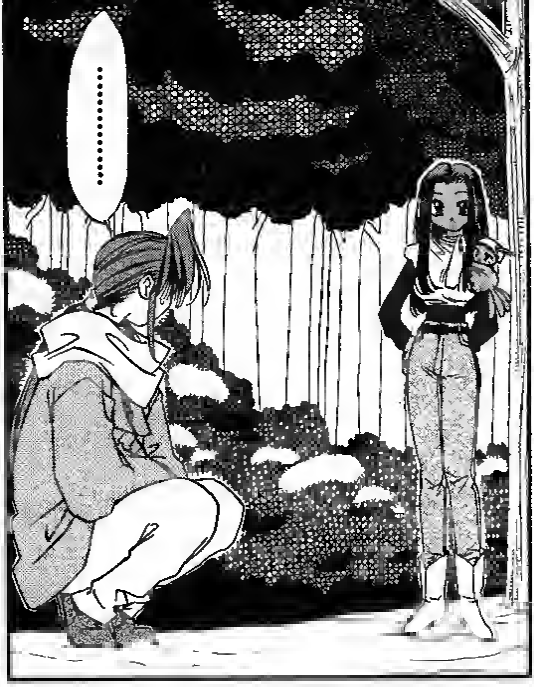
I HAVE MY OWN FAN CLUB...
SIGH...
ザッ
...I DO WANT SHAO TO THINK I'M A NICE PERSON.
WHOA! WHOA!
WELL... BUT...
SOB SOB SOB
...SO HOW DID I GET STUCK BEING THESE KIDS' PERSONAL ASSISTANT?
RUUAN'S HUNGRY.
DON'T YOU HAVE ANY JAPANESE SWEETS?
HEEY, IZUPI.

.....
OH, MR. IZUMO, COULD YOU PLEEAASE HAND ME THAT SHOVEL?
とぼ
とぼ
HEY, IZUMO! THERE'S NOT ENOUGH SNOW!
HEY, IZUMO ...
...COULD YOU HOLD THIS FOR ME, PLEASE?
TAKASHI SAYS THIS NEEDS TO BE PUT UP
THANK YOU.
REALLY...
...YOUR SON IS VERY KIND, IS HE NOT?
HE'S STILL SUCH A CHILD OH HO HO
IZUMO'S MOTHER

WHAT ARE YOU MAKING... ?

WOW! ♡ MASTER TASUKE!! ♡
...I CAN PUT UP WITH THIS.
WELL...AS LONG AS SHAO'S HAPPY...
WHAT DO YOU THINK?! AMAZING, ISN'T IT?!!
WHAT IS IT, A VASE?
HUFF
HUFF
.....
IT LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE RISHU!
HE SHOULD BE A PROFESSIONAL SNOW SCULPTOR
HEY, YOU.
ARE YOU REALLY IZUMO MIYAUCHI?


WELL, NANA.
WHAT'S IT TO YOU?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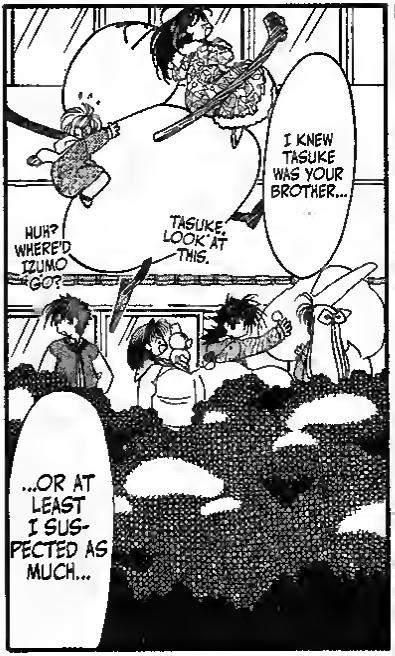
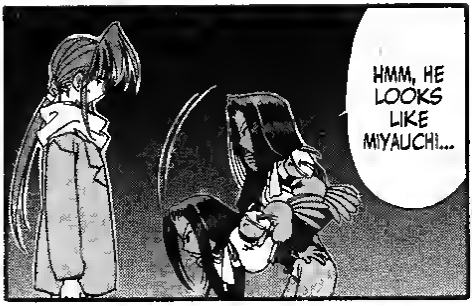

I KNEW TASUKE WAS YOUR BROTHER...
TASUKE, LOOK AT THIS.
HUH? WHERE'D IZUMO GO?
...OR AT LEAST I SUSPECTED AS MUCH...


HMM, HE LOOKS LIKE MIYAUCHI...

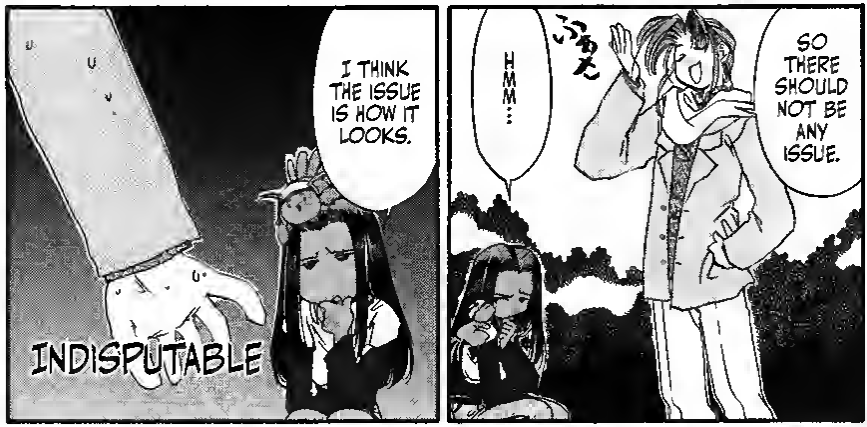
AH HA HA HA HA HA! A MUCH OLDER MIYAUCHI!!
ばしばし
SO? YOU'RE THE SAME AGE AS ME.
WHAT A COINCIDENCE!! THESE TWO WERE IN THE SAME CLASS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL!

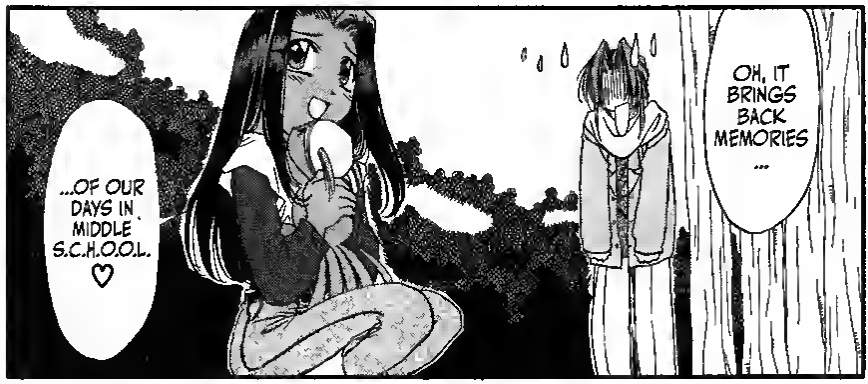
UMM, I WAS TALKING TO YOU...
BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
THERE AREN'T ANY OTHERS IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.
OH, THEY'RE PLAYING.
AFTER ALL, SHICHIRI IS A PRETTY UNUSUAL LAST NAME.
HOW ARE YOU AND TASUKE SO DIFFERENT?
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE SIBLINGS
I LIKE COUNTRIES THAT SNOW. NEXT TIME, I'M GOING TO SIBERIA!!
.....
BUT WHY ARE YOU HIDING?
HEY, WHY'RE YOU HERE?
HE GAVE UP AND ANSWERED
SIGH... BECAUSE THIS IS MY HOUSE, OBVIOUSLY.

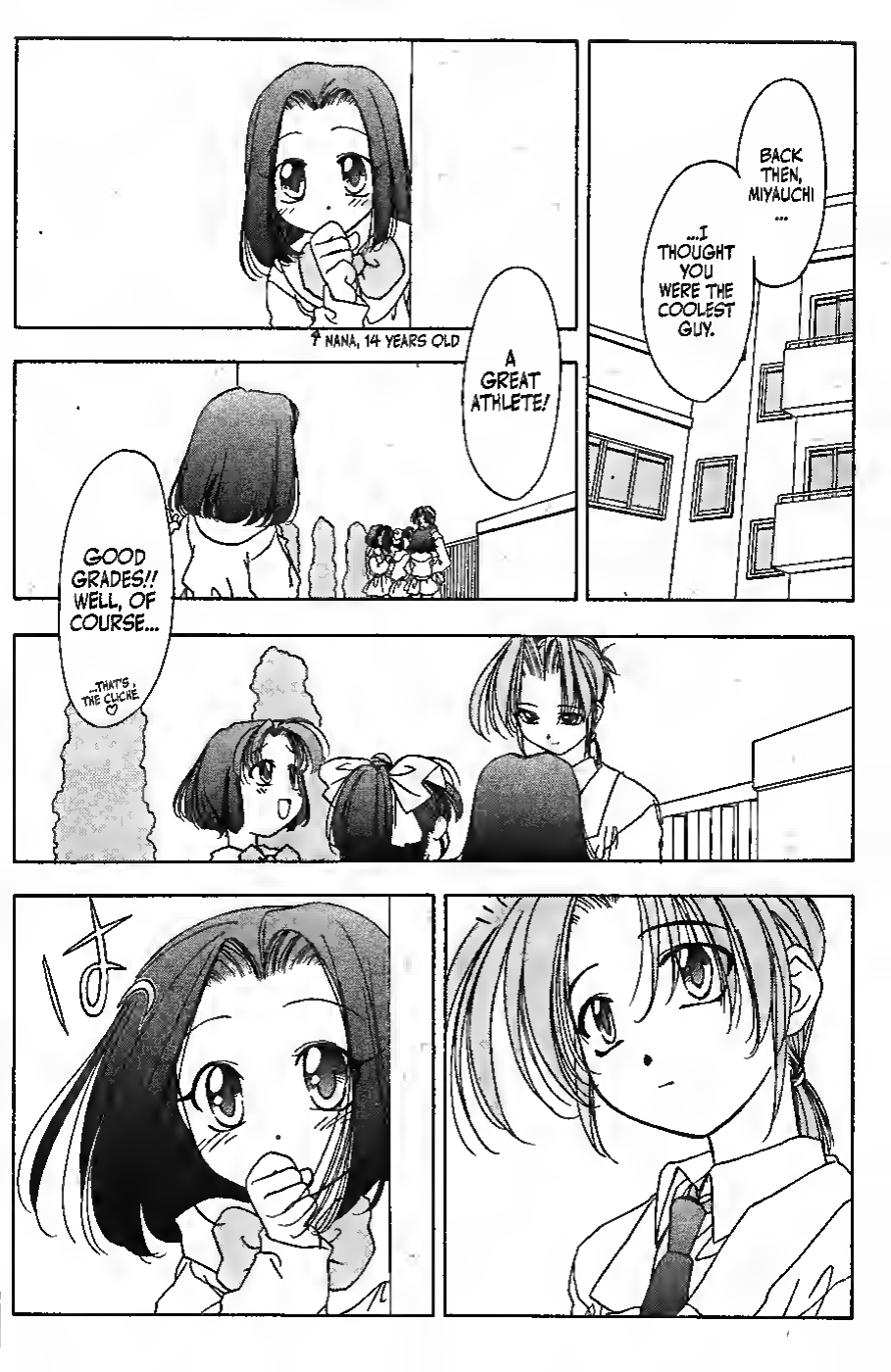
I WASN'T HIDING.
I WAS RESTING!!
UH-HUH, SO WHAT WERE YOU DOING THAT MADE YOU SO TIRED?
NO... THAT'S ...
DUG HIS OWN GRAVE.
HMM, I SEE! IT MUST BE SOMETHING SO NASTY YOU CAN'T TELL ME.
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT!!
WHERE DOES SHE GET THIS...?
OH DEAR, DEAR.
I WAS JUST HELPING THOSE KIDS...
...INCLUDING YOUR BROTHER!!
AND WHAT A PAIN!
TASUKE, LOOK AT THIS TOO.
WHY?
WHAT...?
YOU'RE SO PERSISTANT

SIGH... I HAVE MY REASONS.
IT'S ALL A PART OF MY PLAN TO MAKE SHAO UNDERSTAND MY PASSION FOR HER.
UGH !!!
WHY AM I TELL-ING YOU THIS?!!
ガバッ
.....
...WHAT?
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D TURN OUT TO BE A CRADLE ROBBER?!!
WON
CRADLE ROBBER
WHAAT?
POUT
SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT

YAHOO!
Y-YOU DON'T KNOW?
SHAO'S A SPIRIT WHO HAS LIVED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS!
MISS. PUJAN HON FAIYARE YOU GOING TO GO?


THAT ISN'T THE ISSUE NOW, IS IT?
I THINK THE ISSUE IS HOW IT LOOKS.
INDISPUTABLE
ふるる
HMM...
SO THERE SHOULD NOT BE ANY ISSUE.


OH, IT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES ...
...OF OUR DAYS IN MIDDLE S.C.H.O.O.L. ♡

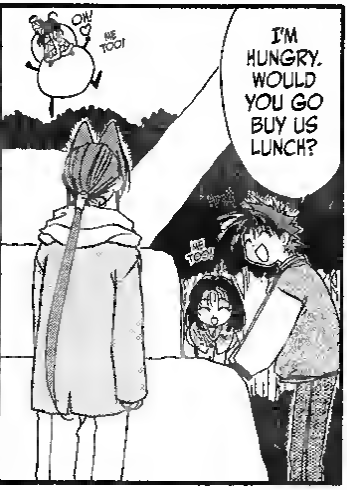

BACK THEN, MIYAUCHI ...
...I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE COOLEST GUY.
NANA, 14 YEARS OLD
A GREAT ATHLETE!
GOOD GRADES!! WELL, OF COURSE...
...THAT'S THE CLICHÉ ♡
1d

ヒソヒソ…
ヒソ
BLUSH...
I HAVE THE FEELING...
...YOU WEREN'T THE TYPE OF FEMALE MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILD WHO BLUSHED.
FEMALE MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILD...
HASN'T CHANGED.
AND WHENEVER THINGS AREN'T GOING YOUR WAY...
...YOU TRY TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT.
WHAT PERSONALITY ARE WE TODAY, TWO-FACE?!
AH HA HA HA! WHAT'RE YOU BEING SO STUCK-UP ABOUT?!
THAA-AAT'S RIGHT!!
YOU WERE THE TYPE WHO WOULD HIT PEOPLE AND LAUGH BY YOURSELF...

!!!
DEFEATED
YOU'RE STILL THE SAME MIYAUCHI, EH?
I DON'T GET IT.
WHY WOULD A GUY WHO COULD HAVE ANY GIRL HE WANTED WITHOUT EVEN TRYING...
..BECOME SO OBSESSED WITH A GIRL HE DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE WITH, AND WHO LOOKS LIKE...A MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRL?
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, SHAO ONLY LIKES TASUKE, RIGHT?
WOW! IT'S GUNHAMMON!!
WELL, SHE DOESN'T REALIZE IT, BUT...

WELL, IF YOU'RE OKAY WITH THAT, IT'S NOT LIKE I CARE.
BUT TO BE BLUNT, THAT MAKES YOU LOOK...
.....
...PATHETIC!!
PATHETIC...
PATHETIC...
PATHETIC...

PATHETIC.


OH!
ME TOO!
I'M HUNGRY. WOULD YOU GO BUY US LUNCH?
ME TOO!

OH?
PERFECT TIMING!!

?
WHY SHOULD I...
...HAVE TO DO ANY-THING...
...FOR YOU BRATS ?!!!
AS IF I'D GO!!
SHAO?
MR. IZUMO.

HUH...?
MAY I PLEASE GO WITH YOU?
MASTER TASUKE, IS IT ALL RIGHT?
SHIO!
WHOOAN!
RISHU...
...YEAH.

LET ME KNOW.
YOU'LL KNOW IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO SHAO, RIGHT?
YES
PATHETIC, TOO PATHETIC!!
...OBSESSED WITH SOME MIDDLE SCHOOL-LOOKING GIRL?
WHY AM I, A MAN WITH HIS OWN FAN CLUB...
SHE'S RIGHT... IT'S TRUE.

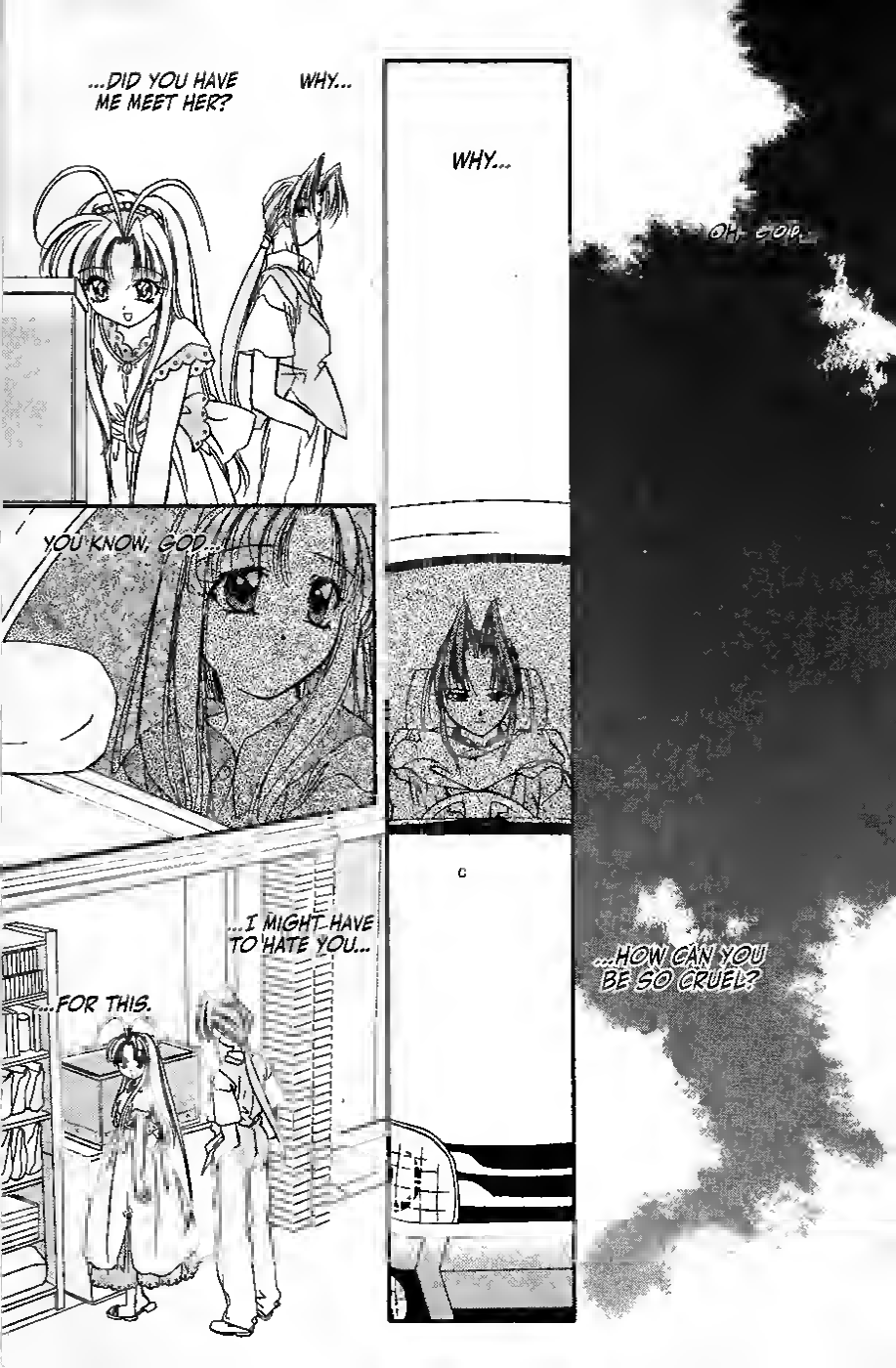
...OTHER THAN THIS GIRL.
THAT'S RIGHT... I COULD HAVE ANY WOMAN I WANT...
DON'T FORGET YOUR SEATBELT!!
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS CHILD.
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS CHILD!!
...HAVE I BEEN...
WHY...
...THIS LITTLE GIRL (AT LEAST IN LOOKS)?
...OBSESSED OVER!!

IS YOUR HEART ...
...HURT-ING?
MR. IZUMO
!...!!
SCREE

THAT'S ALL SHE UNDERSTANDS...

...HUMPH.
IT'S TRUE, REALLY.
THERE ARE TONS OF OTHER WOMEN...

MR. IZUMO.
PIPING HOT LUNCH
I FOUND A PLACE TO GET LUNCH. ♡
NO, MISS SHAORIN.
PLEASE LISTEN.


...DID YOU HAVE ME MEET HER?
WHY...
WHY...
OH, GOD...
YOU KNOW, GOD...
...I MIGHT HAVE TO HATE YOU...
...FOR THIS.
...HOW CAN YOU BE SO CRUEL?

# CHAPTER 56
# SHINTO PRIEST OF INDECISION (PART TWO)

MASTER TASUKE!!
I DON'T TELL ME TO FETCH!!
FETCH ME THAT SHOE!!
HMM...?
WHAT IS IT?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO SHAO?!

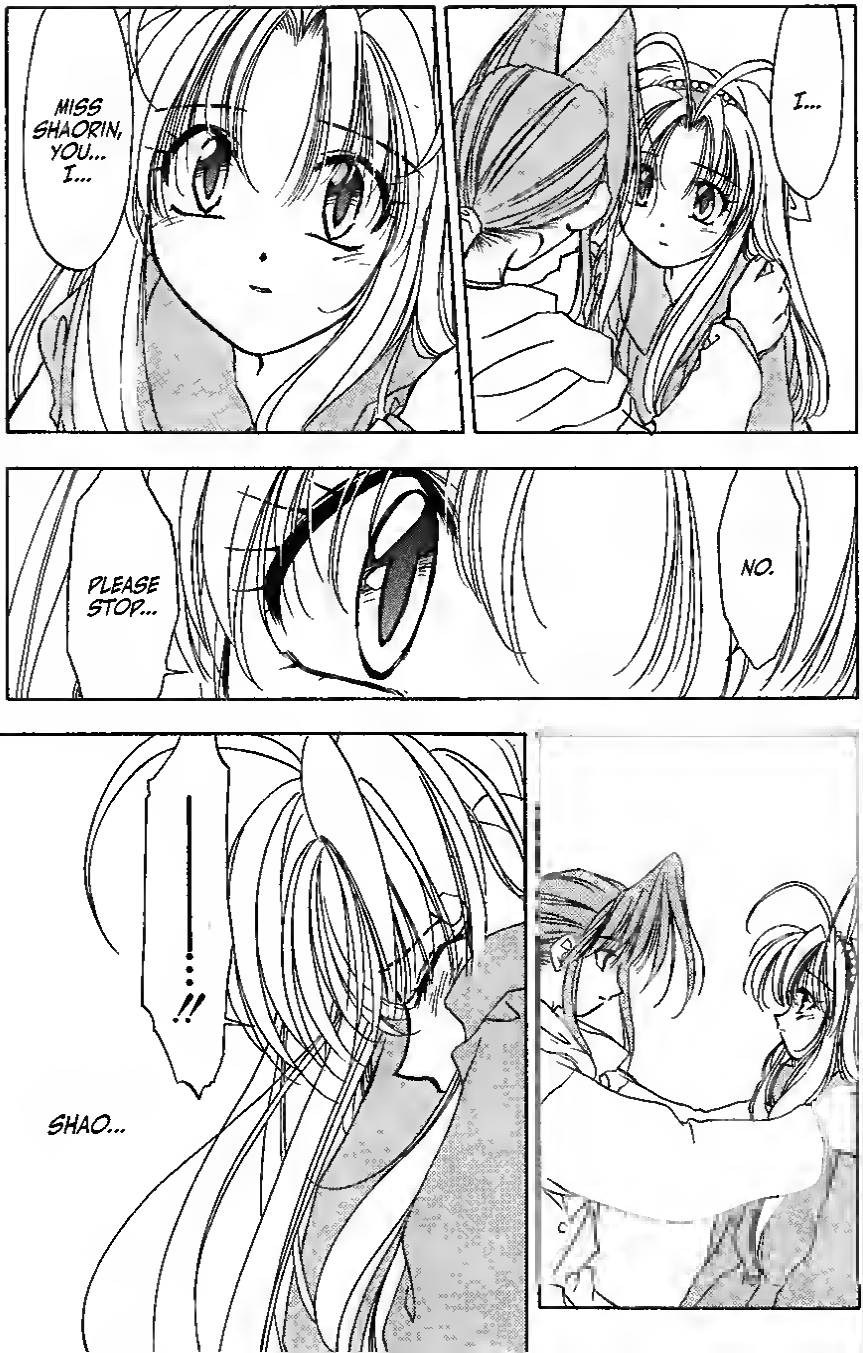
COME ON, YOU CAN REEACH, DO
SHAO...
HEY, THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO USE!
OH, I'M GOING TO BORROW THIS SHOVEL. SAYONARA!!
?
EVEN IF I RUN, I WON'T MAKE IT IN TIME
HELLO?
HOW...
...AM I GOING TO SAVE HER...?

.....
WHOOOAA!
SHAOO!
LUNCH

!!!
MISS... SHAO-RIN?!
MASTER TASUKE?!
SOE HOW HAVE

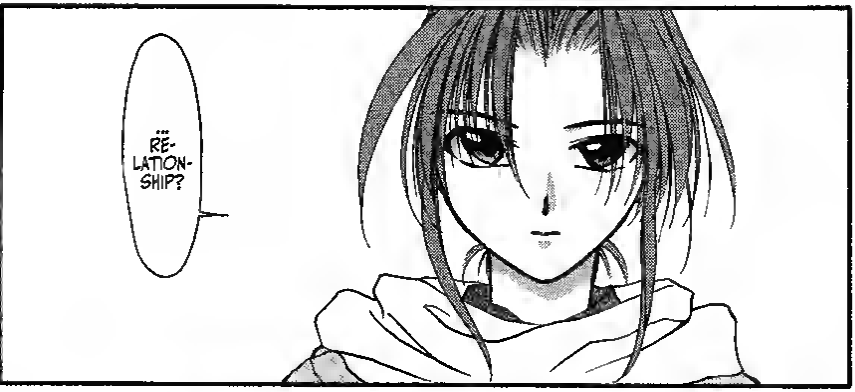
UH... UMM...
WHAT IN THE WORLD..?
"THIS IS MY FIRST TIME BEING TRANSPORTED BY AN AUTOMATIC FOUR-WHEELED VEHICLE." -KIRYUU
.....
"MISS SHACHIN..."
I SAID, UMM...
"...PLEASE LISTEN."

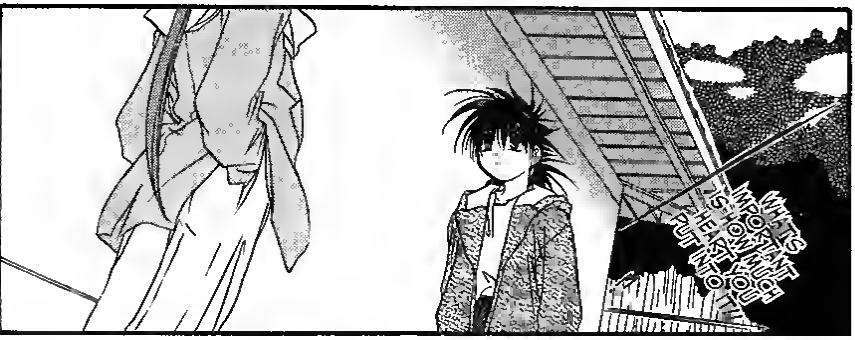
I MEAN, I'VE WANTED TO...BUT I HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING UNTIL NOW...
I'VE BEEN TRYING ...
..TO TELL YOU THIS FOR A LONG TIME.
...PROBABLY, I GUESS, BECAUSE... I DIDN'T KNOW THE EXTENT OF MY FEELINGS FOR YOU.
BUT NOW I KNOW.
THE WAY I FEEL FOR YOU IS DIFFERENT THAN THE WAY I'VE EVER FELT ABOUT ANY WOMAN.


MISS SHAORIN, YOU... I...
I...
PLEASE STOP...
NO.
!!
SHAO...

...MAYBE YOU FEEL...
I...
...DON'T THINK I SHOULD HEAR ANYMORE!!
...SOME...
...I UNDER-STAND.
LET'S BUY LUNCH AND GO BACK.
...RAIN THAT I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.

TA-SUKE...
HUH ...?
Y-YEAH.
...DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT LATER?
MAY I ASK...
...ABOUT YOU AND SHAO'S...
IT LOOKS DIRTY
THERE'S NOT ENOUGH SNOW
WHAT ELSE AM I SUPPOSED TO USE?
HUH? WHERE'S MISS RUUAN?

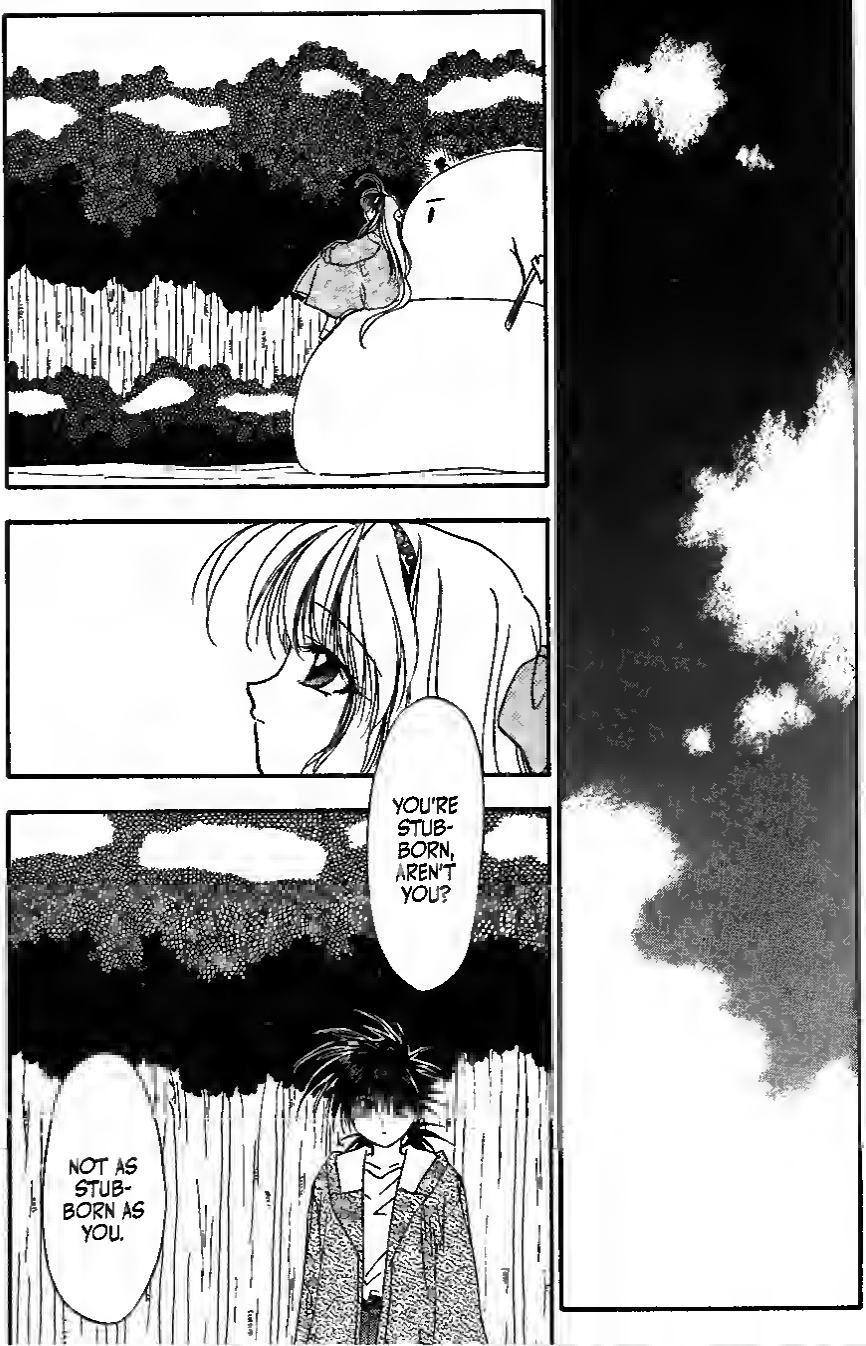

...RE-LATION-SHIP?


WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS HOW MUCH HEART YOU PUT INTO IT.

...I THOUGHT MAYBE THERE WAS MORE THAN A FAIR CHANCE I COULD...
...COME BETWEEN YOU AND SHAO.

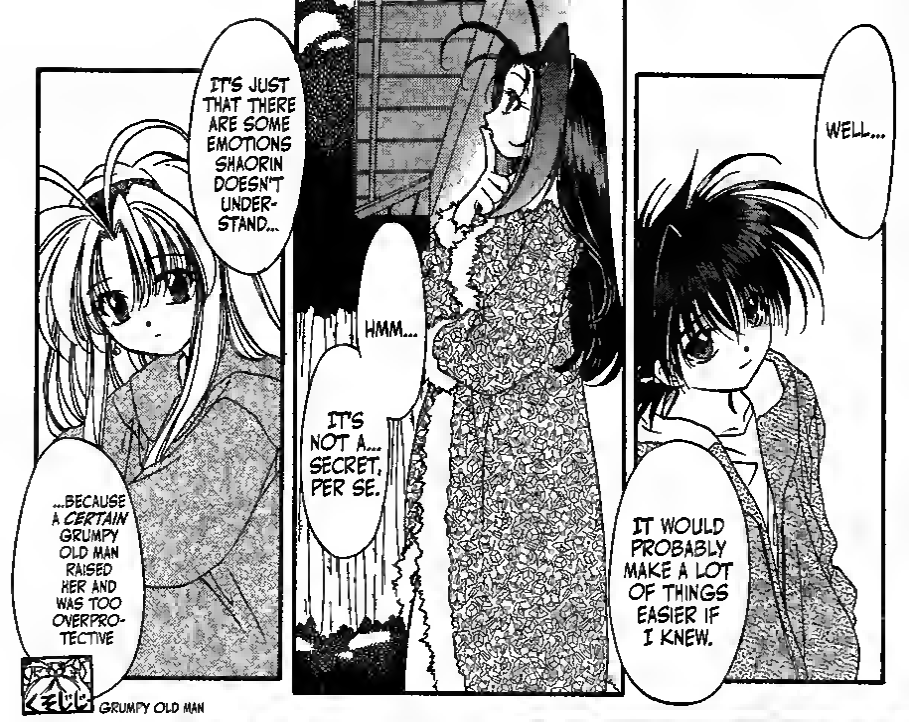
...JUST A PASSING THOUGHT, BUT...

EAR-LIER ...
...WHEN I WAS WITH SHAO, I THOUGHT ...


YOU'RE STUB-BORN, AREN'T YOU?
NOT AS STUB-BORN AS YOU.

OH, YOU MEAN LIKE ...
MISS RUIJAN.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT TASUKE SAID EARLIER?
I KNOW YOU WERE EAVESDROPPING.
"I JUST ..."
...WANT TO SAVE SHAO.
BUT MAYBE ...
...YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HAS THE POWER TO SAVE HER.
"I REALIZED..."
"...THERE'S STILL SO MUCH I CAN'T DO."

"...THEN IT PUTS ME IN A TOUGH SPOT." ALL THAT?
"THAT'S WHY IF YOU ASK ME ABOUT OUR RELATION-SHIP..."
THERE'S ...
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
...SOME-THING SECRET ABOUT SHAO...
...THAT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT, ISN'T THERE?

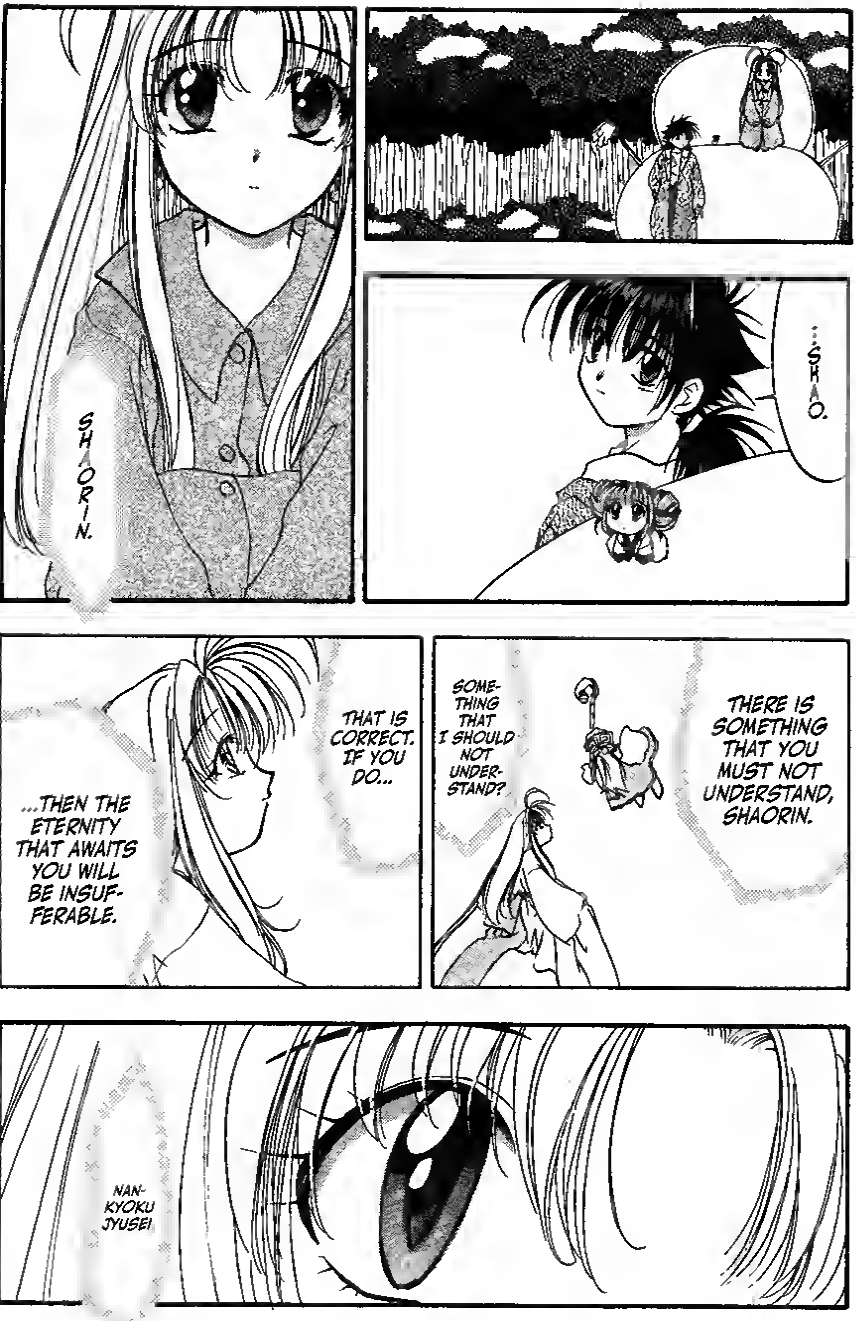

WELL...
IT WOULD PROBABLY MAKE A LOT OF THINGS EASIER IF I KNEW.
HMM...
IT'S NOT A... SECRET, PER SE.
IT'S JUST THAT THERE ARE SOME EMOTIONS SHAORIN DOESN'T UNDER-STAND...
...BECAUSE A CERTAIN GRUMPY OLD MAN RAISED HER AND WAS TOO OVERPRO-TECTIVE
GRUMPY OLD MAN

IF YOU CAN MAKE SHAORIN UNDER-STAND...
...THOSE PERPLEXING EMOTIONS...
.....
...THEN I HAVE A CHANCE OF STEERING SHAO'S FEELINGS TOWARDS ME.
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE IMPLY-ING?

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, BUT...
...IT MIGHT BE WORTH A TRY--YOU NEVER KNOW.

I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU ANY MORE.
I DON'T WANT TO MAKE MASTER TAA MAD.

NO...
...YOU TOLD ME PLENTY.
.....


SHAORIN.
...SHAO.
THERE IS SOMETHING THAT YOU MUST NOT UNDERSTAND, SHAORIN.
SOMETHING THAT I SHOULD NOT UNDERSTAND?
THAT IS CORRECT. IF YOU DO...
...THEN THE ETERNITY THAT AWAITS YOU WILL BE INSUFFERABLE.
NAN-KYOKU JYUSEI

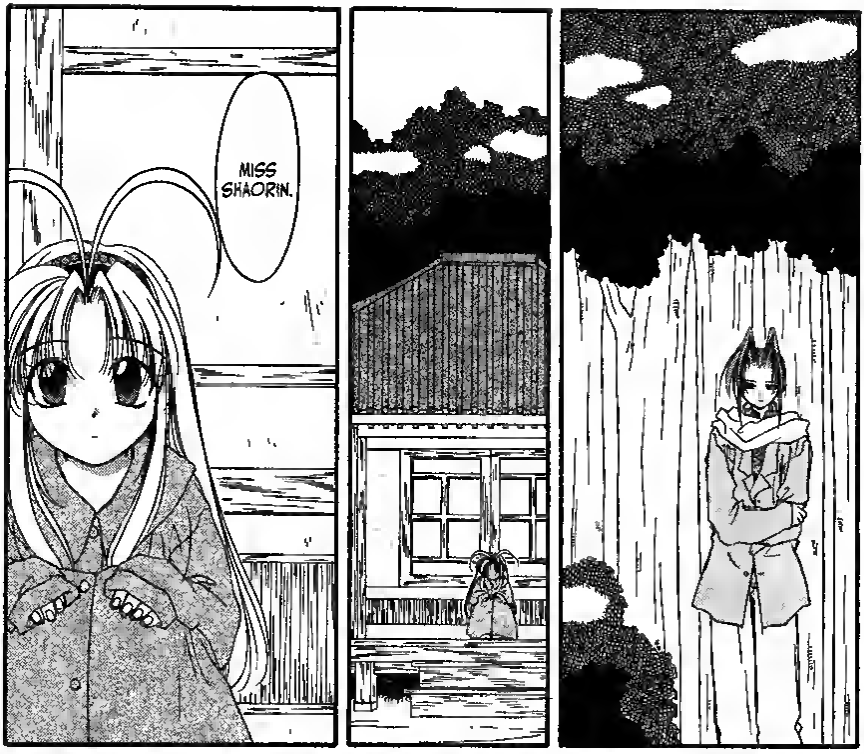
...IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT. I, NANKYOKU JYUSEI...
...WILL PROTECT YOU FOREVER.
IS IT A HARD-SHIP?
BUT SHAO-RIN...
IT IS VERY, VERY MUCH A HARD-SHIP.
SHAO.
UMM...

MASTER TASUKE,
I'M SORRY.
IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I AM BY MYSELF FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE?
.....
MY LIEGE FEELS SORRY...
SHAO ...
I'M SORRY.

"I THOUGHT I HAD GROWN MORE."
"THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT" ...
...IS WHAT HE SAID.
THAT IS...WHY IS HE SORRY?
HE BORE MANY CHALLENGES AND FOUGHT AND TRAINED.
MY LIEGE PROBABLY ALLOWED MISS SHAO TO GO WITH MR. IZUMO BECAUSE...
...MISS SHAO WANTED TO DO SO HERSELF.
MR. IZUMO, MAY I PLEASE GO WITH YOU?
MAYBE BECAUSE ...
...HE THOUGHT MISS SHAO WAS CLOSE TO ESCAPING THE FATE OF A SHUGO-GETTEN.
HOWEVER, HE REALIZED...
...HE COULDN'T SAVE HER EVEN THOUGH HE KNEW MISS SHAO WAS IN DANGER.
AND THEN WHEN MISS SHAO CAME HOME, SHE WAS DEPRESSED.

SO WHAT'RE YOU GETTING AT?
.....
.....
THAT IS WHY. WHAT I MEAN IS...
...MY LIEGE IS TRYING HIS HARDEST WITH MY CHALLENGES, BUT--
SO CREATE HARDER CHALLENGES FOR HIM.
NO?
YOU CAN DO THAT, CAN'T YOU?
むぐ!!
.....

I JUST WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT...
...AIRHEADEDNESS OF HERS THAT'S TORMENTING MASTER TAA.
.....
WAS I TOO LENIENT?
OH, DID MISS ATORI PUT THE KOTATSU IN THE CLOSET FOR ME?

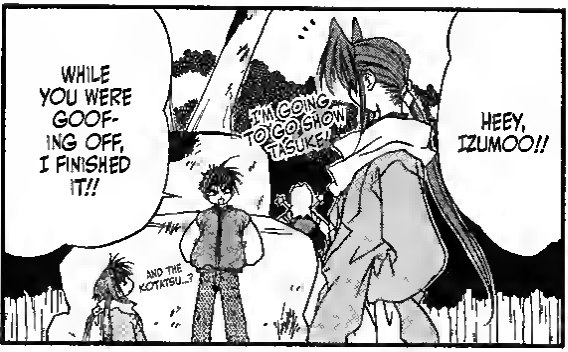

MISS SHAORIN.

I AM SORRY ABOUT EARLIER.
I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT FEEL. I BEHAVED SELFISHLY.

I UNDER-STAND.
EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE ALONE SOME-TIMES.
...MR. IZUMO.
I... UMM...
...RIGHT NOW...
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I WON'T BOTHER YOU FOR LONG.
BUT BEFORE I GO, PLEASE LET ME...
...SAY JUST ONE THING.

THOSE FEELINGS THAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT NOT UNDER-STANDING ...
...DON'T NEED TO BE UNDER-STOOD RIGHT AWAY.
AND IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT...
...THAT YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND THEM.
.....
THAT'S WHY...
...YOU SHOULDN'T LET YOURSELF GET TOO STRESSED OUT ABOUT IT.

HERE, WHY DON'T YOU EAT THIS AND...
すっ
...TRY TO CHEER UP?
THANK...
...YOU.


WHILE YOU WERE GOOF-ING OFF, I FINISHED IT!!
I'M GOING TO GO SHOW TASUKE!
HEEY, IZUMOO!!
AND THE KOTATSU...?

OH?
YAY! IT'S DONE! THE KAORI SNOW-WOMAN.

HUMPH.

GOD...
...IT SEEMS I DO HAVE TO BE GRATEFUL TO YOU AFTER ALL.
FLUFF, FLUFF, FLUFF, ALL HE DOES IS FLUFF HIS HAIR.
HUH? WHERE IS TASUKE?

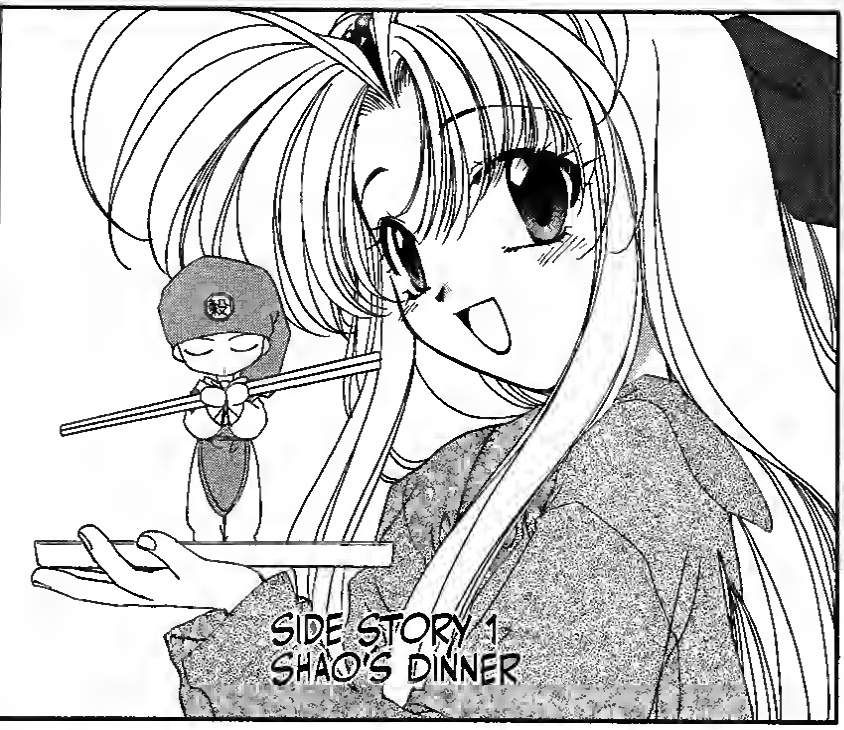
PLEASE FILL IN THE HOLES YOU'VE MADE IN MY YARD.
GOOD FOR YOU.

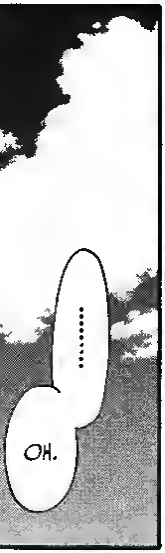
...MY NAME'S MR. IZUMO.
AND ALSO ...

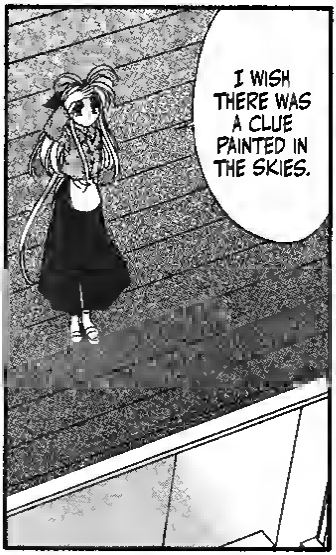
I FEEL GRATEFUL, FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, THAT YOU HAVE ALLOWED ME TO MEET HER.
I'VE FINALLY REALIZED HOW SERIOUS MY FEELINGS ARE FOR SHAO.
ONE CURRY BUN, PLEASE.
YES...
YOU'RE STILL IGNORING MY QUESTIONS.
HEY, WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT HERE?
...OH. HELLO, NANA.
WHY ARE YOU AT SCHOOL TODAY?
...MORE GRATEFUL TO GOD THAN EVER BEFORE.
I THOUGHT THAT I SHOULD BE A PRIEST WHEREVER I GO.
THE TRUTH IS, LATELY I'VE BEEN...
CURRY BUN

OH... THAT'S RIGHT.
YOUR TIMING IS PERFECT, NANA.
WOULD YOU PLEASE TELL TASUKE...
"I WILL NOT BE DEFEAT-ED...
...BY YOU."
THAT IS ALL.

# SPECIAL SIDE STORIES

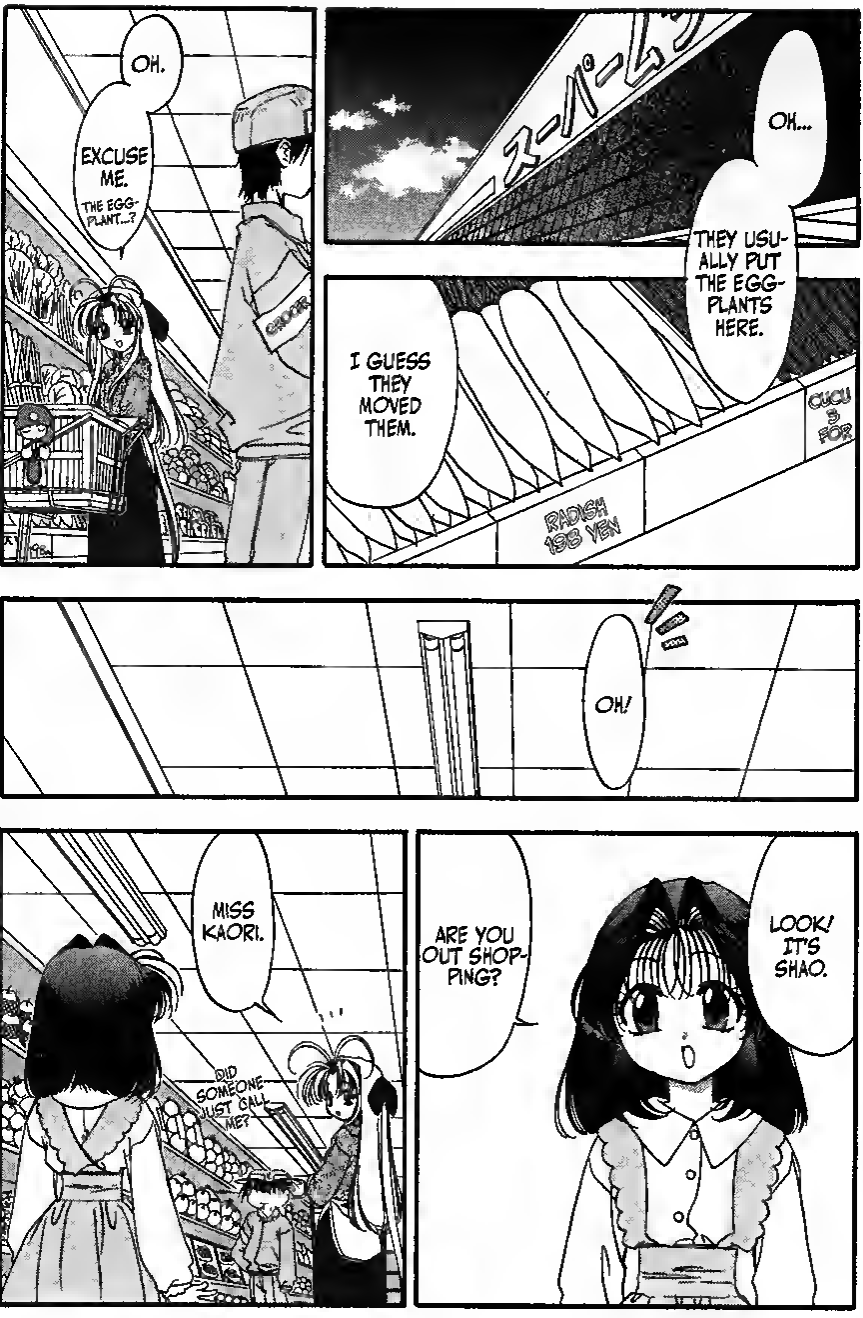

SIDE STORY 1
SHAO'S DINNER


OH.
.....

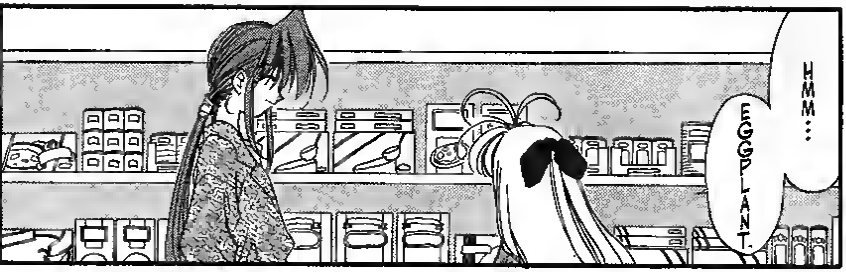

I WISH THERE WAS A CLUE PAINTED IN THE SKIES.

HMM...WHAT SHOULD I COOK?
DO YOU EVER WONDER ...
...WHAT YOU SHOULD MAKE FOR DINNER?

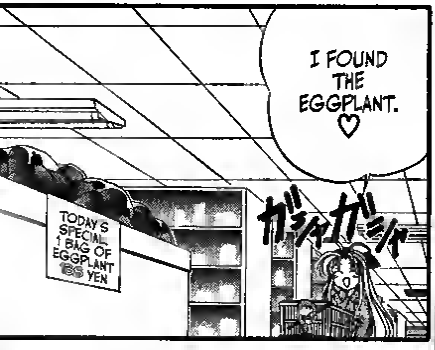
IT LOOKS LIKE AN EGGPLANT!!
ALL RIGHT!
I'LL MAKE MABO NASU TODAY!!
RAI RAI...
THAT'S HOW IT HAP-PENS...
...HACHI-KOKU.
LET'S GO COLLECT INGRE-DIENTS FOR...
...MABO NASU!!

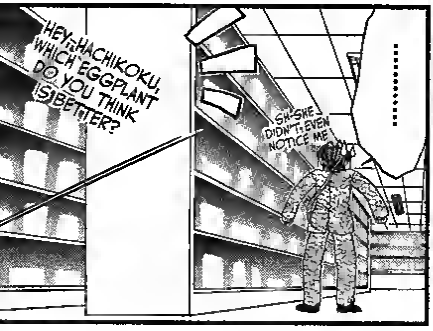

OH.
EXCUSE ME.
THE EGG-PLANT...?
スーパームラ
OH...
THEY USUALLY PUT THE EGG-PLANTS HERE.
I GUESS THEY MOVED THEM.
CUCU 5 FOR
RADISH 198 YEN
OH!
MISS KAORI.
DID SOMEONE JUST CALL ME?
ARE YOU OUT SHOPPING?
LOOK! IT'S SHAO.

I BET IF YOU STIRRED SOME PUDDING INTO IT...
...IT WOULD BE SUPER DELICIOUS!
YOU KNOW, 'CUZ IT'S KINDA THE SAME TEXTURE AS TOFU!!
YES!
MASTER TASUKE LIKES EGGPLANT.
.....
OOH.
YOU'RE HAVING MABO NASU FOR DINNER TONIGHT?
VEGETABLES
BUT I...
...NEED TO HAVE EGGPLANT.
SHE'S NOT LISTENING.
BECAUSE OF MY COOKING SKILLS
AND THEN WHEN TASUKE EATS IT, HE'LL BE LIKE, "WOW! THIS IS SO GOOD! WHAT? THIS WAS KAORI'S IDEA?!" AND TASUKE WON'T BE ABLE TO RESIST ME...
SPICES
OH?
WELL, IF IT ISN'T THE LOVELY MISS SHAORIN.
I WONDER WHERE THE EGG-PLANT IS.
THE GROCER IS GONE...
OH, SHAO?! SHE MUST'VE GONE TO LOOK FOR PUDDING.
SIGH...

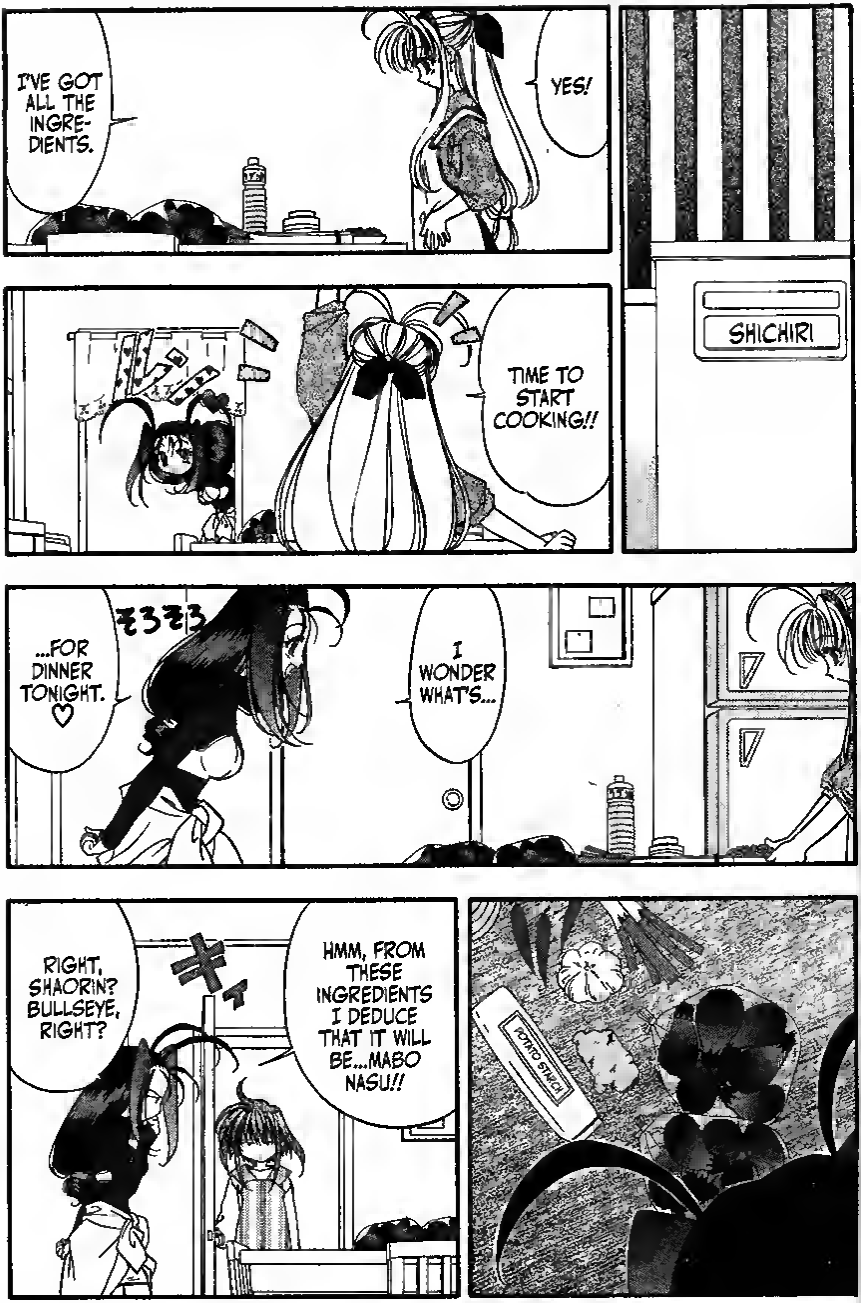

HMM...
EGGPLANT.

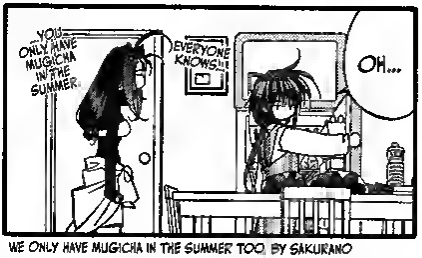
EGGPLANT.
EGGPLANT.
EGGPLANT.
EGGPLANT.
スス


I FOUND THE EGGPLANT.
♡
TODAY'S SPECIAL: 1 BAG OF EGGPLANT 88 YEN
ガラガラ

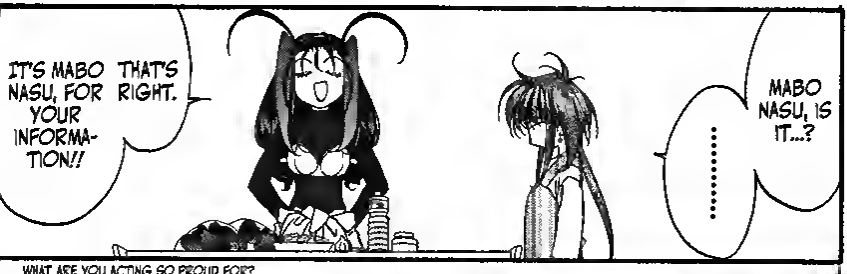

HEY, HACHIKOKU, WHICH EGGPLANT DO YOU THINK IS BETTER?
SH-SHE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE ME!
.....

OH!

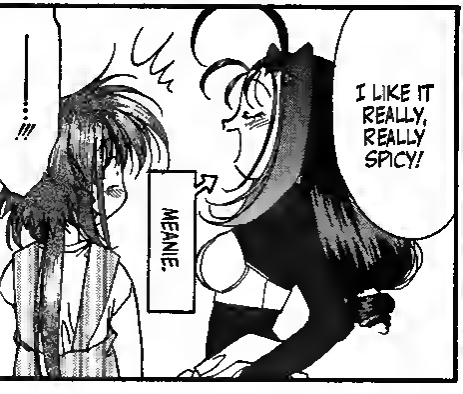

I'VE GOT ALL THE INGRE-DIENTS.
YES!
SHICHIRI
TIME TO START COOKING!!
...FOR DINNER TONIGHT.
I WONDER WHAT'S...
RIGHT, SHAORIN? BULLSEYE, RIGHT?
HMM, FROM THESE INGREDIENTS I DEDUCE THAT IT WILL BE...MABO NASU!!
MONTO SYAICI

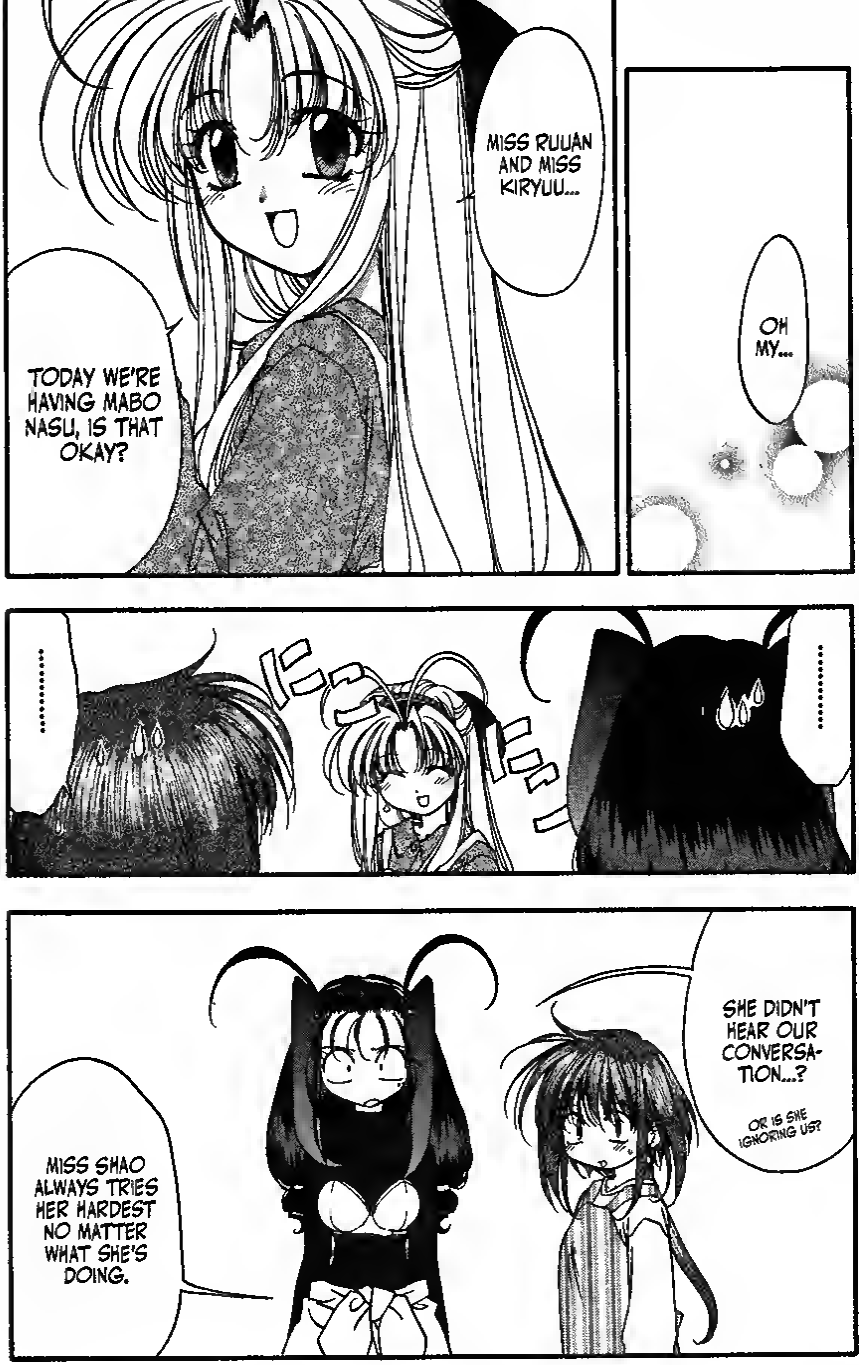



WE ONLY HAVE MUGICHA IN THE SUMMER TOO. BY SAKURANO




WHAT ARE YOU ACTING SO PROUD FOR?

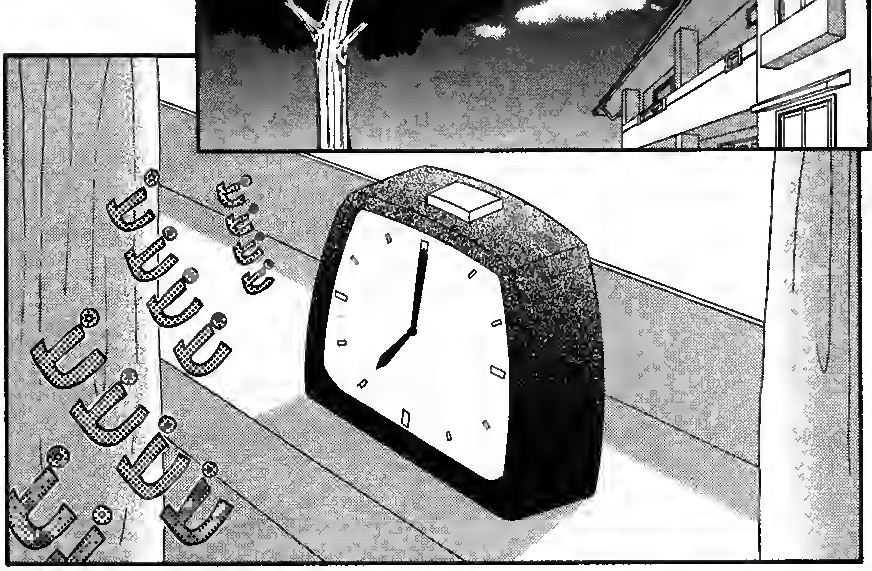



TODAY WE'RE HAVING MABO NASU, IS THAT OKAY?
MISS RUUAN AND MISS KIRYUU...
OH MY...
.....
.....
SHE DIDN'T HEAR OUR CONVERSATION...?
OR IS SHE IGNORING US?
MISS SHAO ALWAYS TRIES HER HARDEST NO MATTER WHAT SHE'S DOING.

EVERYONE!
DINNER'S READY! ♪
♪
EVERY DAY YOU WONDER AND WONDER AND COME UP WITH SOME-THING TO COOK.
PHEW. IT'S NOT TOO SPICY AND IT'S NOT TOO SWEET I LIKE IT...
YEP IT'S DELICIOUS, DELICIOUS.
HAPPINESS IS HAVING PEOPLE WHO ENJOY YOUR COOKING. ♡
I WOULD HAVE LIKED IT SPICIER.
MUNCH MUNCH SLUURP

SIDE STORY 2
KIRYUU'S MORNING
HMM.
OKAY...
すくっ
WE WILL GO WITH THIS TODAY.
WRITE
WRITE
WRITE
WRITE
WRITE
WRITE

...DOING?
WHAT'S SHE...
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
IS THAT COMING FROM KIRYUU'S ROOM?!
WHA--?
DOING
2:38 A.M.
HOOOT
HOOOT
NOW...THE PREPARATIONS ARE PERFECT.
SIGH.
IT... STOPPED...?
MY COMPUTER
I GUESS I SHALL SLEEP NOW...
3:05 A.M.


ピピピ

WAKE UP TO YOUR VOICE
CLICK
THREE MINUTES LATER, THE SECOND ALARM CLOCK SOUNDS.
.....
BANSHOU TAIRAN!
ALARM GO OFF.
THE "BANSHOU TAIRAN" I RECORDED WITH MY VOICE...
...WILL TRIGGER A KOKESHI TO GROW 165 CM TALL, AND 98 CM AROUND.
RICO

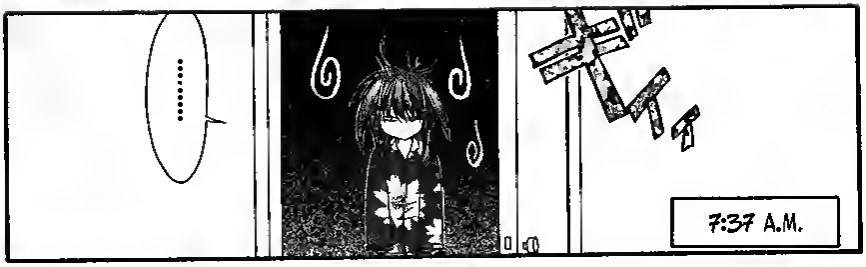
IN 10 MINUTES, IT WILL NO LONGER FIT ON ITS BASE AND WILL BEGIN TO FALL ON ME.
AT THAT TIME, I CAN CALCULATE MY POSITION ON THE BED TO BE (I KNOW FROM THE INSTINCT HONED OVER MANY LONG YEARS, THAT I TURN AN ESTIMATED ONCE EVERY 30 MINUTES)...
...IN PART 2 OF THE BED, AT AN ANGLE OF SOUTH-SOUTHWEST, FACING RIGHT.
AT THAT POINT I WILL BE THINKING, "I DO NOT WANT TO WAKE UP YET."
THUS ...
...UNCONSCIOUSLY, MY FOOT WILL TWITCH...

...AND WILL KICK THE KOKESHI, WHICH HINDERS MY SLEEP.
THE LOCATION IT IS PROPELLED TO IS NEAR THE DOOR (DEDUCED FROM MY ANGLE).
ばっ
ROOOAR
IF I PLACE "TRAMP-O-LEAN" THAT MY LIEGE'S FATHER PURCHASED THERE, THEN...
YEW!!
TRAMP-O-LEAN
...NATURALLY...

...THE KOKESHI WILL RICOCHET AND...
バコーン
...CRASH INTO THE CEILING, AND THAT IMPACT IS...
...TODAY'S ULTIMATE WEAPON.
THE FINAL BLOW.

A HUMON-GOUS KNIFE.

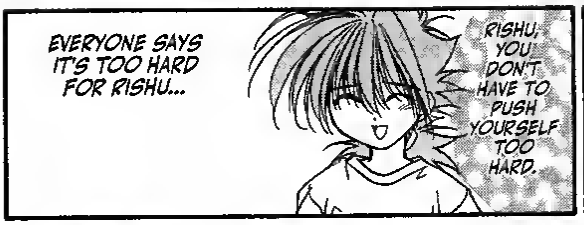
.....
I AM UP...

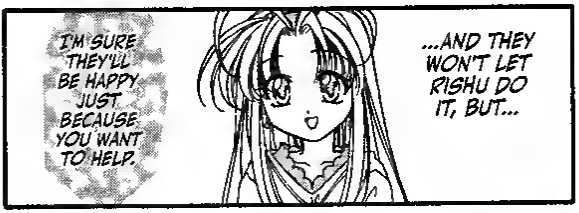

.....
7:37 A.M.

OH.
MORNING, KIRYUU.

ボヘ
……
YOU LOOK TIRED.
YOU ALWAYS DO, BUT...
MORNINGS ARE HARD FOR ME.
MAYBE IT IS WHAT THEY CALL LOW BLOOD PRESSURE...
HMM. OKAY!
LET US GO WITH THIS TODAY.
3:28 A.M.
MAYBE ...
...IT'S BECAUSE SHE STAYS UP ALL NIGHT THAT IT'S HARD FOR HER TO WAKE UP IN THE MORNINGS...
CLANK
CRACK CRACK
DRAG DRAG

SIDE STORY 3
RISHU'S DREAM

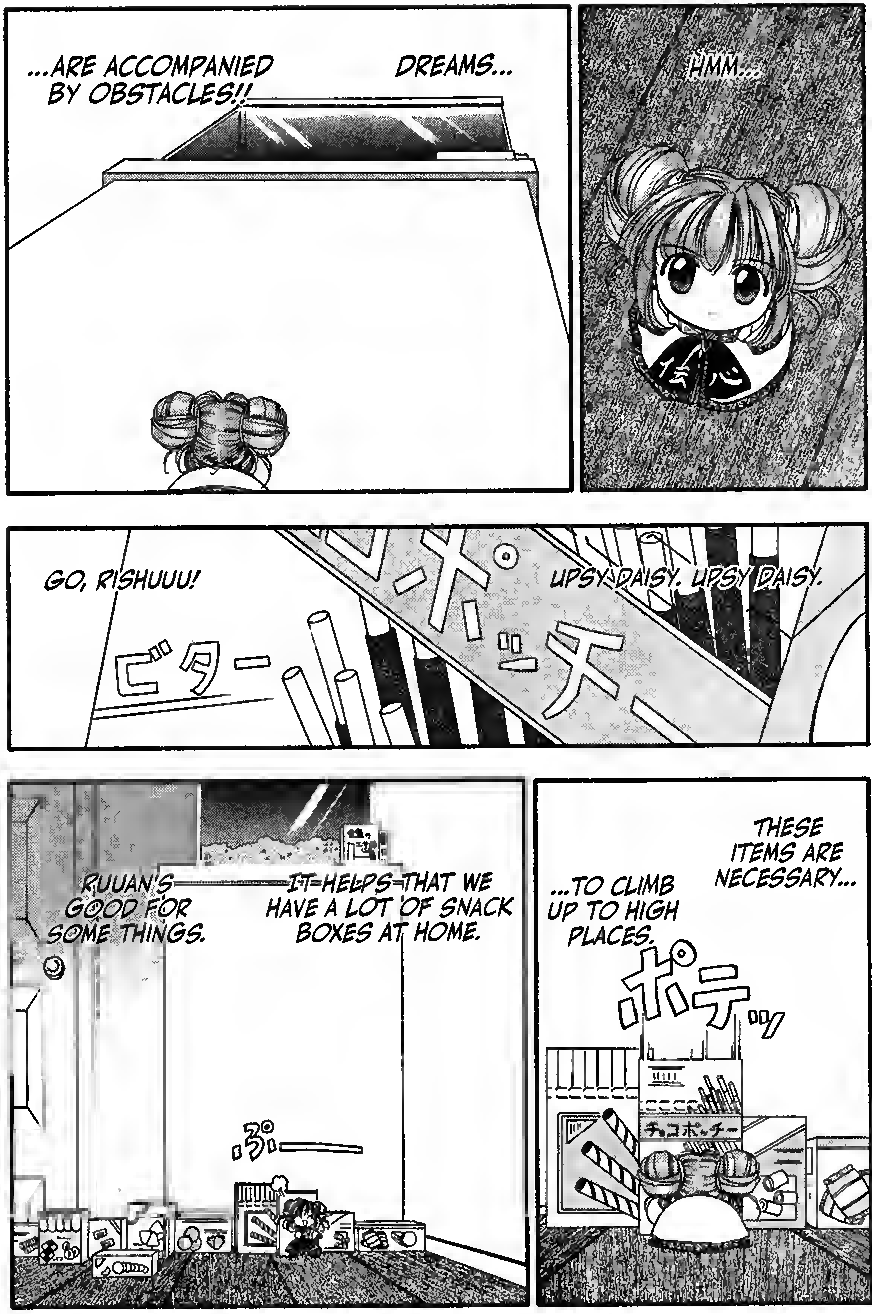

EVERYONE SAYS IT'S TOO HARD FOR RISHU...
RISHU, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD.

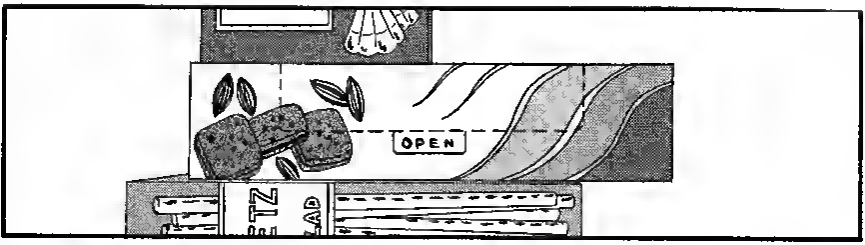

I'M SURE THEY'LL BE HAPPY JUST BECAUSE YOU WANT TO HELP.
...AND THEY WON'T LET RISHU DO IT, BUT...

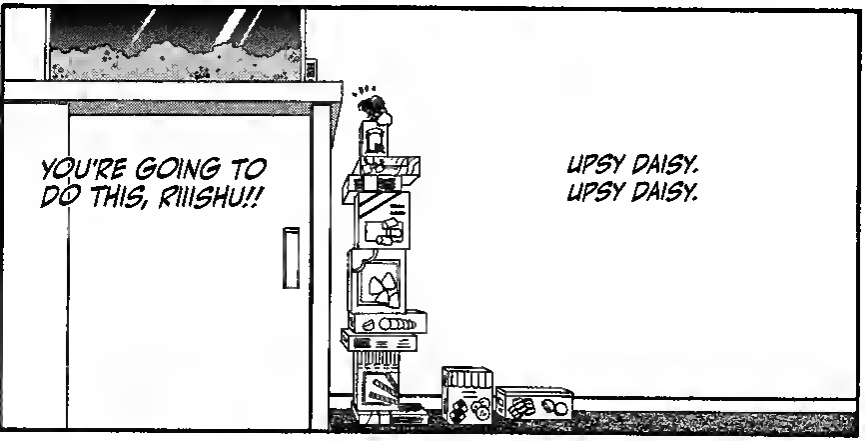
...THAT'S NOT TRUE!!
YOU'LL GET EATEN.

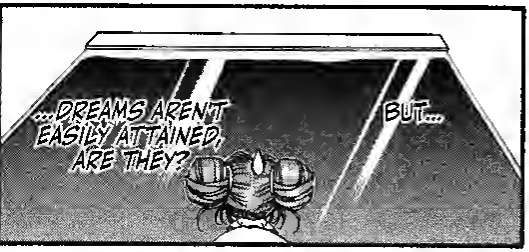
RISHU HAS A DREAM.

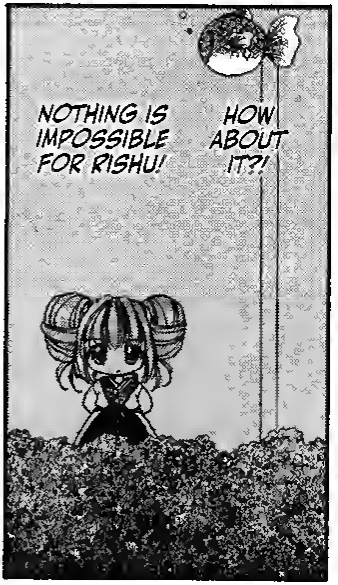
...AND RISHU IS WATCHING OVER THE HOUSE.
MASTER TASUKE AND LADY SHIZUKA SAID THEY'RE GOING SHOPPING.
IT LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE'S GONE OUT TODAY...
THIS IS MY CHANCE!
STOMP
THAT'S WHY...YES!
I'M GOING TO FEED THE GOLDFISHIES!!
TODAY IS THE DAY!
TODAY-IS-THE-DAY!!
TODAY IS THE DAY!!!

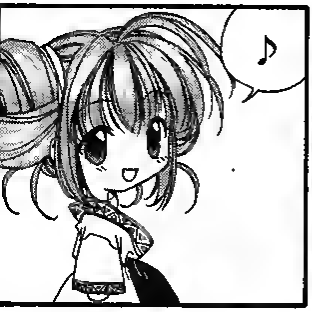

...ARE ACCOMPANIED BY OBSTACLES!!
DREAMS...
HMM...
GO, RISHUUU!
UPSY-DAISY. UPSY DAISY.
RUUAN'S GOOD FOR SOME THINGS.
IT HELPS THAT WE HAVE A LOT OF SNACK BOXES AT HOME.
...TO CLIMB UP TO HIGH PLACES.
THESE ITEMS ARE NECESSARY...
ポテ
チョコポッチー


OPEN


YOU'RE GOING TO DO THIS, RIIISHU!!
UPSY DAISY. UPSY DAISY.


...DREAMS AREN'T EASILY ATTAINED, ARE THEY?
BUT...


NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR RISHU!
HOW ABOUT IT?!

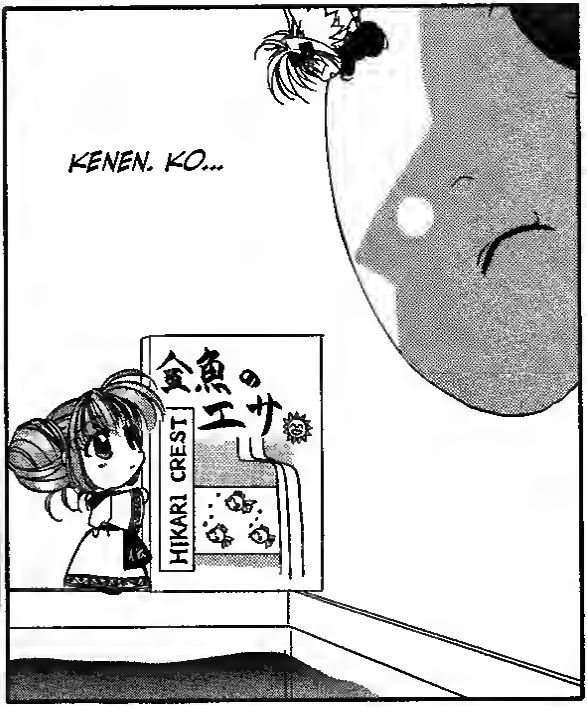

♪

NICE WORK, RISHU. ♡
SIGH...
IT'S JUST A LITTLE MORE, RISHU!
UPSY DAISY. UPSY DAISY.
金魚のエサ
HIKARI CREST
金魚のエサ
HIKARI CREST
.....
FOOD. FOOD.
WELL NOW...
金魚のエサ
HIKARI CREST

"RISHU, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD."
"I'M SURE THEY'LL BE HAPPY JUST BECAUSE YOU WANT TO HELP."
"HA HA HA!"
.....

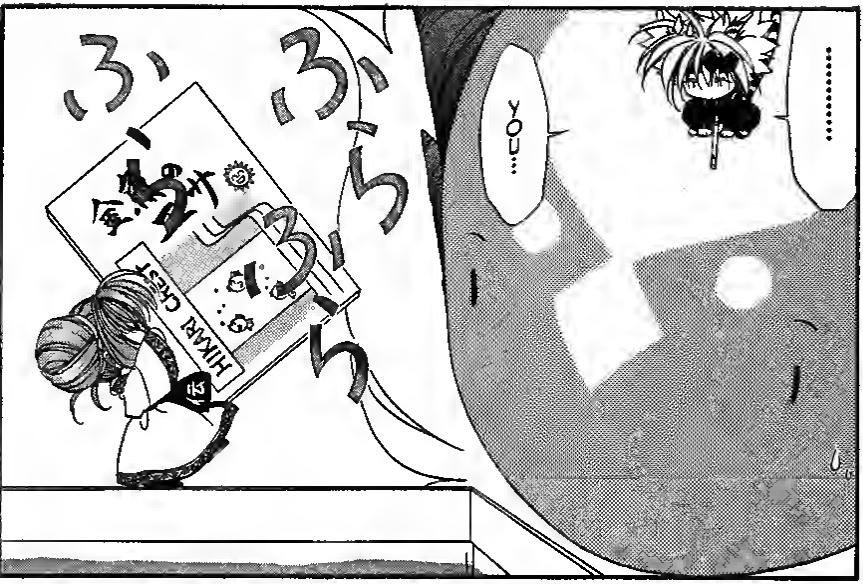
金魚のエサ
金魚

YOU WANT TO FEED THEM BUT YOU FORGOT THE FOOD! HA!
ARE YOU STUPID OR WHAT?!!
KOHON...!

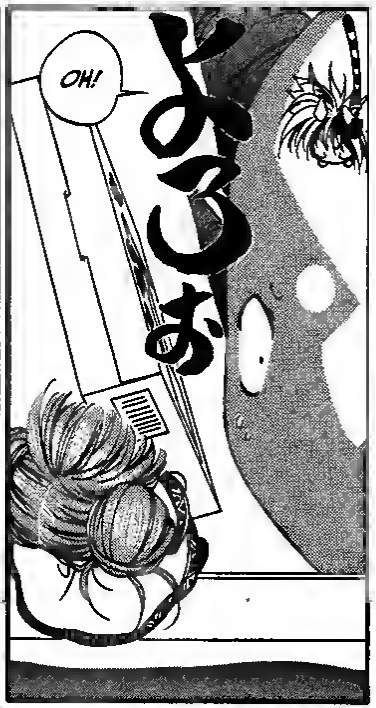

KENEN. KO...
金魚のエサ
HIKARI CREST

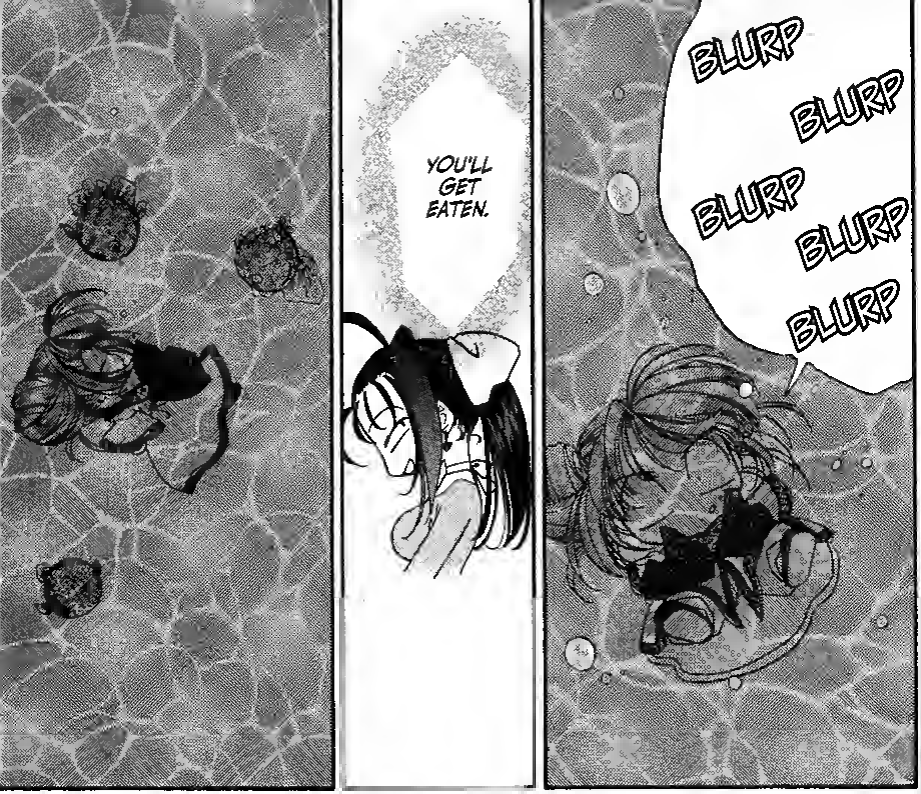
...
RISHU!!
RIGHT...
金魚のエサ

I'M SURE THE GOLDFISH WILL BE FLATTERED THAT YOU TRIED SO HARD TO FEED THEM.
WELL, YOU TRIED TO HELP. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT MUCH.

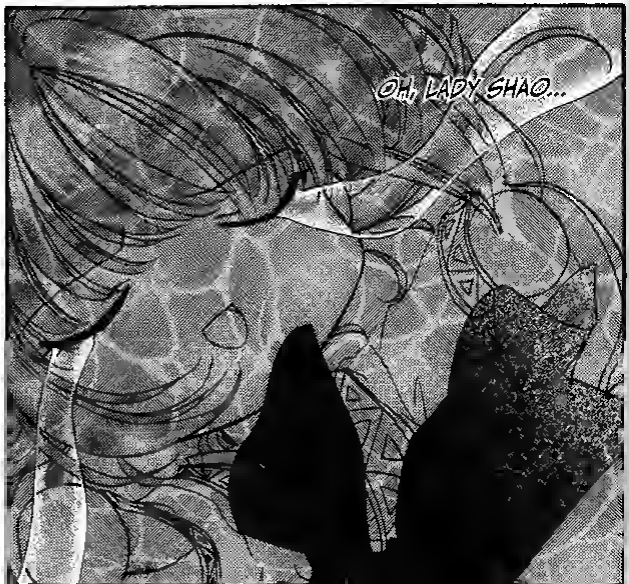

……
YOU…
ふらふら
ふらふら
HIKARI QUEST

SPLASH
ざぶーん
……


OH!
よろっ



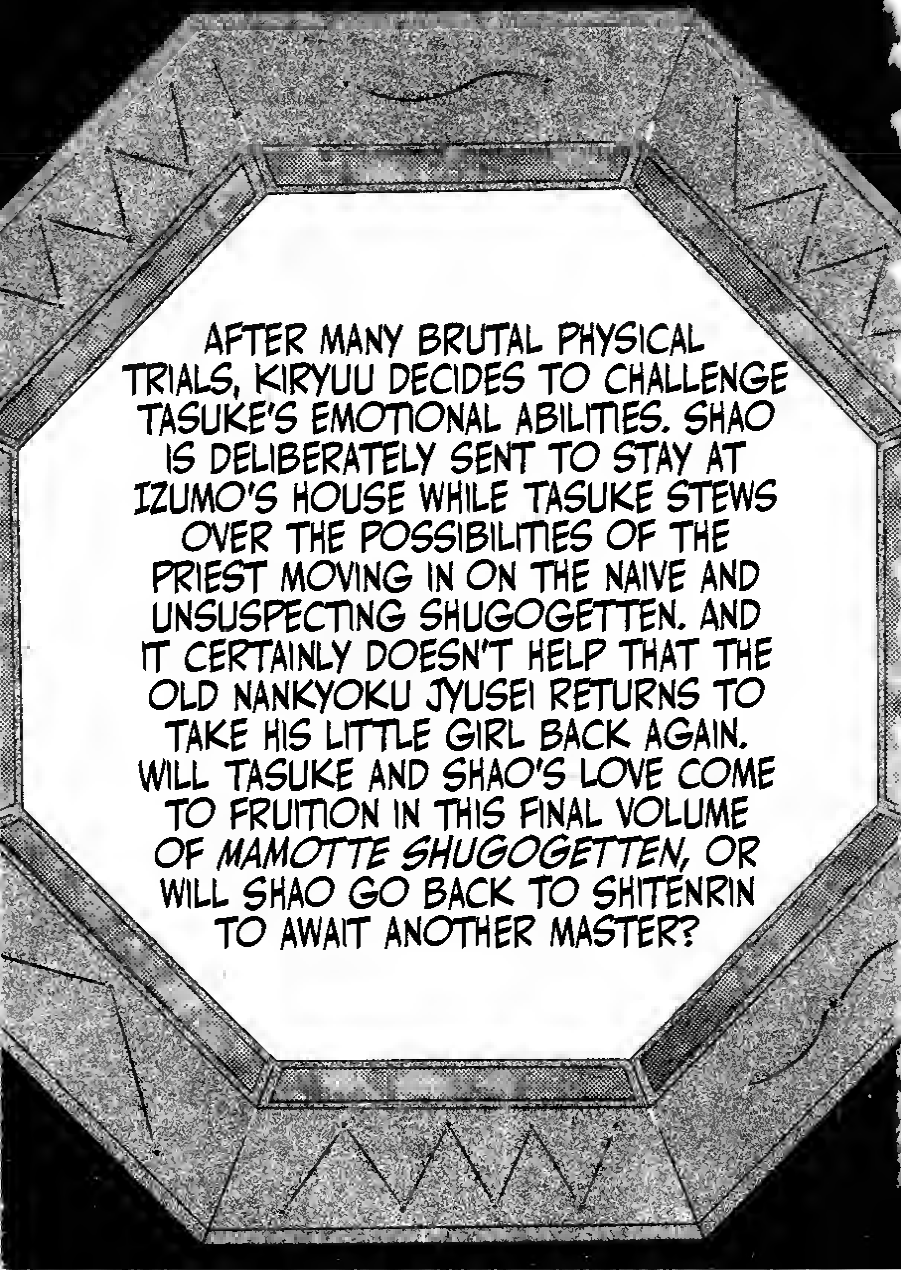

RISHU HAD A DREAM...



IT'S ALL RIGHT. RISHU IS SATISFIED.
RISHU BECAME FISH FOOD.
...AND MADE THE DREAM COME TRUE.
RISHU. YOU CAN OPEN YOUR EYES NOW. THE GOLDFISHES SAVED YOU!!
IT WAS TOO HARD FOR YOU AFTER ALL.
RISHU DID IT! RISHU DID IT! RISHU'S AMAZING. ♡
MASTER TASUKE, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF LADY SHAO.

MAMOTTE SHUGOGETTEN 8 THE END

IF YOU'RE PURE OF HEART YOU'LL SEE THIS NEXT VOLUME PREVIEW...


AFTER MANY BRUTAL PHYSICAL TRIALS, KIRYUU DECIDES TO CHALLENGE TASUKE'S EMOTIONAL ABILITIES. SHAO IS DELIBERATELY SENT TO STAY AT IZUMO'S HOUSE WHILE TASUKE STEWS OVER THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE PRIEST MOVING IN ON THE NAIVE AND UNSUSPECTING SHUGOGETTEN. AND IT CERTAINLY DOESN'T HELP THAT THE OLD NANKYOKU JYUSEI RETURNS TO TAKE HIS LITTLE GIRL BACK AGAIN. WILL TASUKE AND SHAO'S LOVE COME TO FRUITION IN THIS FINAL VOLUME OF *MAMOTTE SHUGOGETTEN*, OR WILL SHAO GO BACK TO SHITENRIN TO AWAIT ANOTHER MASTER?

# mamotte shugogetten

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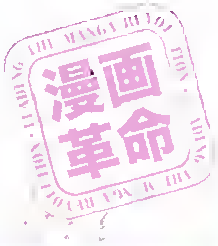
Kiryuu is the newest member to join the family, and her challenges are quite a handful for Tasuke. With Tasuke preoccupied, Shao is lonely and becomes the hapless victim to another lie created by the mischievous Shonko—a he that is designed to "help" the Shugogetten! With the household encountering endless magical adventures within, little do they pay attention to a mysterious guest that shows up on their doorstep!

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